ESSAYS IN ENGLISH HISTORY

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ESSAYS

IN

ENGLISH HISTORY

FOR

Students and General Readers

BY

R. P. KARKARIA.

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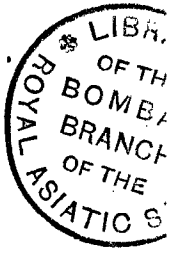

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1895

To

The Memory

OF

HENRY CURWEN

JOURNALIST AND MAN OF LETTERS

1845—1892

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PREFACE

THESE short Essays have been chiefly written with the view to assist students preparing for University Entrance and other examinations in English as well as in the history of England. It is thus hoped that both the substance and the manner may prove useful. This little book is by no means intended to supersede existing text-books. Its object is to supplement them, and to serve, in a way, as an introduction to them. Main features and characters have been selected as subjects for essays in order to treat, in some sort of connected way, many little things scattered up and down the ordinary text-books. In the essays on constitutional and religious subjects many things not usually explained in these books have been treated and, it is hoped, made clear to the Indian student. Special attention has been paid to the constitution and to the foreign relations of England, as these subjects do not receive that amount of care and attention which their great importance deserve in the ordinary hand-books. No attempt has been made to be exhaustive either in the list of subjects selected or in their treatment. As far as the writer knows, this is the first book of its kind, and, should it be found useful, he intends to follow it up by a second series containing many subjects necessarily omitted here owing to the narrow limits prescribed. His short experience as examiner has convinced him of the necessity of some such work as might help the candidates to face their examiners with greater confidence and success. He hopes that this book may enable them to do this. A companion volume on Indian History is in the press and will soon be ready.

For obvious reasons it has not been thought advisable to give references in the text to the authors quoted.

A list of those authors is appended, not to make an idle parade of learning, but to indicate the authorities for the statements made in the book and to induce at least some of the readers to go to them for further knowledge and enlightenment on the interesting subjects which they treat. Many more books not directly quoted have been consulted, and the reader may depend upon this little book being the result of a study of most of the best and latest authorities on English history extending over several years. Even students in colleges might get something from it, as the author has found whilst lecturing to candidates for the Arts degree.

Though this book, as stated above, is intended chiefly for the use of students, it may also be found more widely useful. General readers cannot afford to neglect English history in these days, and they will find here interesting reading on many subjects based on some of the latest and best writers.

R. P. KARKARIA.

MATHERAN, *9th May* 1895.

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ERRATA.

Page 19, line 21, for *more* read *were.*
„ 29, „ 19, for *momentary* read *momentous.*
„ 58, „ 11, for *Sepir* read *destroyer.*

ESSAYS

IN

ENGLISH HISTORY.

The English Conquest of Britain.

WHAT is called at present England was originally inhabited by a people called Britons, who may be said to be the aborigines, or original inhabitants, of the country. This people were in the island when the great Roman general Julius Cæsar invaded it. After some time it was subjugated and became a part of the mighty Roman Empire, which was in ancient times a great power like the British Empire of to-day. When this Roman Empire decayed in course of time, it had to abandon distant provinces like Britain, as all its soldiers were wanted at Rome to defend it from the enemies that invaded it from Germany. Britain, thus deprived of Roman soldiers, became a prey to the wild people called Picts, who inhabited the northern part of the island now called Scotland. In order to defend themselves against these attacks, the Britons called in the assistance of a warlike people from Germany named the Jutes and Angles. These came willingly and succeeded in driving the Picts back to their wild homes in the north. But these Angles liked the land of Britain so much that they were very slow to return to their own German homes. The Britons did not like this. Hence there was a conflict, and the new people who had come in as friends and allies remained in the country as foes. The struggle between them was long and hard. The Britons fought desperately for their independence in their own land against the foreign intruders. But the latter received help from their people in Germany who came in great numbers. At last, after a century

of strife, the Angles got the upper hand, and the poor Britons were crushed and driven to the western part of the island called Wales. There they throve and were left alone, so that Wales is the only part of the island now where distinct traces are to be found of the ancient British manners, customs, language and literature, and even religion. The Angles conquered the country and settled permanently in it. They called their new country after themselves Angle-land or England. They were the ancestors of the modern English, who thus are the descendants, not of the original inhabitants, but of the conquerors of the country named after them. This expulsion of the Britons and the victory of the Angles is called the English Conquest of Britain. It was of a very terrible character. The old inhabitants were everywhere hunted down and slain, their towns and cities plundered and destroyed, and the whole country most ruthlessly ravaged. The Britons were almost rooted out of the land and their ancient civilization completely effaced. The Britons were of the Celtic race, while the conquerors were Teutons. Hence Teutonic influences prevailed in England especially in the language which was at that time largely related to German. The Romans had introduced Christianity into Britain to a small extent, though the greater part of the Britons followed their old religion of the Druids. The new fierce conquerors were idolators believing in the mythology of northern Europe, having gods like Woden, Thor, and others. Some time after their conquest and settlement Christianity was introduced and spread among them on a vast scale by priests from Rome, the headquarters of that religion. The English became Christians and civilised within a century. They opened schools, cultivated learning, and wrote books both in Latin, the common language of learned men of that time, and in their own tongue. Cædmon was the first and greatest of those writers who wrote in English, and his noble poem on the Creation of the World and its later history, as told in the Bible, is a splendid monument of the dawning genius of the new English nation.

The Norman Conquest.

By the Norman Conquest is meant that series of events, military and others, by which the Crown of England passed away from its own kings to a foreigner from Normandy in France, who succeeded in handing it down to his descendants. This conquest was very different from the previous English conquest. For, unlike the Angles, Duke William claimed England as his own by law, and invaded it only to enforce what he thought to be his right. Again this conquest was not such a barbarous and ruthless thing as the former conquest of Britain by the heathen Angles. The English were neither killed nor driven out, nor enslaved, like the ancient Britons. They continued to live in their own land as before, only under other and foreign masters. The English, of course, had to suffer much from this change. The Norman ruler brought with him his foreign friends and supporters who had to be provided for. This he did by taking lands, houses, and offices from Englishmen and by giving them to these men. These Normans were very arrogant and despotic. For a long time there was mutual hatred and distrust between them and the English, who could ill brook the insolence of their foreign masters. But after some generations, the Normans, having gradually adopted the language, manners, and customs of the land of their settlement, took more kindly to the English, and eventually they merged into each other. The work was one of slow amalgamation and not destruction. The English had formerly exterminated the Britons from their own land and demolished their civilization. Not so the Normans. Instead of destroying the English and their institutions, they themselves in course of time were turned into Englishmen and forgot their former home and manners. The English too were affected by contact with the Normans, who slowly changed their language, law, and thought; so that, after some centuries, neither the English nor the Normans remained what they were before the conquest. That great and important event had changed the whole course of the history of England and consequently of Europe. Its results and effects upon

the country must thus be closely examined. This we proceed to do in the next essay.

The Norman Conquest—its Effects and Results.

THE effects of the Conquest were deep and far-reaching, and were felt for centuries after. The changes that were made were not radical and violent in character. With a few exceptions, the old system and institutions were kept up, though in a modified form. In the words of Mr. Freeman, it "did not very greatly bring in things which were quite new, but rather strengthened and hastened tendencies which were already at work." At the time of the Conquest it seemed as if Englishmen had lost altogether their liberties, their laws, and their independent existence as a nation. But if we study the history of England under the Norman kings closely, we shall see that the Conquest actually preserved for Englishmen all those things more perfectly than they could have kept them if the Conquest had never happened. It did not suddenly cut off all connection with the past of the country, and thus destroy the good as well as the evil that was in the old institutions. Slow and gradual change was the chief work of the Conquest. The change has been great in the end; but at no particular intervening period did it appear great, because it was all done bit by bit. Every new little change and modification introduced into the existing things had time given it to mingle thoroughly with the old and thus to gain strength.

Among effects and results we may notice a few of the most prominent and important. First and foremost among these is the fact that England began to have much more to do with the other countries of Europe than before. With a prince who had possessions in France, and who was a rival of the French king, for its head, England necessarily came in contact with that country. By the marriages and alliances of its Norman kings with other European families this contact grew closer till England became in course of time one of the chief powers of Eu-

rope, having a voice in matters of general European policy. This connection with Europe was most marked in the case of the relations of England with the Church of Rome. Henceforward England came in very close contact with the Pope, who obtained greater power in that country. This was resented at times by the English kings and people; and hence the numerous and bitter conflicts with Rome which play so large a part in English history. Another important result was that the power of the king was greatly strengthened and increased. The former kings held their kingship as the highest office bestowed by the nation at its choice, though generally bestowed on the descendants of former kings. But under the Normans the kingship became a possession, usually transmitted in strict hereditary succession, within the family of the Conqueror. The effect on the constitution and the political institutions of the country was that they went on quietly developing and changing. The old national assembly, which was called by the Saxon name of the "Witanagamot," went on existing and meeting, though under the French name of "Parliament." So also other old English institutions and offices, which only changed their names. Among the other effects the chief is that on the language. Before the Conquest the tongue of the English was a pure Teutonic one, with inflexions, and with very few foreign words. The Conquest changed this completely, so that within a few centuries English lost nearly all its inflexions and became thoroughly saturated with French, the language of the Normans, from which a vast number of words were, even needlessly, borrowed. As regards learning and literature, the Conquest encouraged both. Men of learning and science of all kinds came to England. Englishmen themselves as well as Normans in England took more and more to literature. They wrote in Latin chiefly, and occasionally in French. English suffered for a long time, as learned men did not pay much attention to it and did not cultivate it. But after some time it began to rise, till a new native literature arose, rivalling and excelling the foreign one. The Conquest also influenced art in England, especially the art of building. The old Roman model of building churches with round arches was given up, and what is called the Norman style,

of architecture was largely introduced. From churches this style spread to houses and other buildings. The Normans introduced the building of castles which were formerly quite unknown in England. And these Norman castles play a great part in later history. We hear more of sieges than of open battles, as men gathered within these castles for defence. Another effect of the Conquest on warfare was that cavalry and archers, which were formerly very scarce in English armies, came into great vogue, and the old array went out of use.

The English Constitution.

THE constitution of a country is the body of laws and custom by which it is governed. Every country which does not depend merely upon the will or caprice of its king has some sort of a constitution. Now-a-days nearly every European country has a written body of rules drawn up for its government, and thus possesses what is called Constitutional Government. England has a constitution which, though it has served as a model for most of these, differs from them all in many important matters. The English Constitution was never made or drawn up at one particular period of time, nor is it to be found written out at length in one place for the information of people. It has grown in the course of a thousand years of history by a natural process. It began with small, even insignificant, beginnings so far back as 800 A.D.—nay some writers trace back its sources to even earlier times, when the Germans were still leading a semi-savage life in their forests in the heart of Europe. As the people advanced in civilization and their political needs increased, changes suited to these were slowly and gradually introduced generally without much noise. On the other hand, as old times passed away and with them the old habits and wants, the old political institutions and laws also dropped of themselves. The famous political philosopher Burke compares the British Constitution to a tree which from the small seed noiselessly sown under ground grows up after centuries to be the gigantic oak, with innumerable branches and massive

stem immovably fixed in the earth, and weathering numberless storms. The fact that it has grown up slowly accounts for the very great stability which it alone of all other constitutions enjoys. Every right and privilege which it contains has been gained with effort and perseverance, and not much was gained at any particular time. Hence plenty of time was allowed for the new additions to mingle and assimilate with the old. Very little has been introduced merely for the sake of experiment as in France and other countries. The need for a change has always had to assert itself, sometimes for a very long period and very loudly, before that change was made. Nearly every privilege which the English now enjoy through their constitution has cost their ancestors enormous active trouble as well as passive and anxious waiting and patience. Whatever has been got after hard effort is well prized and appreciated; and this is the case with the liberties of the English people. The Englishman of to-day steps into the inheritance of all the past ages, and knowing what it all cost them in bygone times, he values his present possession highly. He too contributes his share by striving to add new privileges and reforming old abuses, for the constitution is not rigid and closed against changes. On the contrary, its chief characteristic is that it is flexible and easily adaptable to altered circumstances. It is like a vast pile of buildings, consisting of various parts, built at different periods by the occupiers for their convenience some six hundred years ago and some sixty, while from others the scaffolding is only recently removed. Such a building cannot be known for its architectural beauty and symmetry. And this is the case with the British Constitution. It is not symmetrical and regular. It has got many of what are called anomalies. As in the building some very old parts have become uninhabitable and are consequently deserted, though allowed to stand and are not pulled down, so in the Constitution some old laws very useful in former times have now lapsed into entire disuse and abeyance owing to altered circumstances, though they have not been removed from the statute-book, where they still nominally stand. The Constitution is meant for the use and enjoyment of the people, and therefore

changes and reforms which are found conclusive to this end are always being made. This goes on even to-day, and it must be said that of late they are being made rather too frequently. Perhaps this is owing to the prevailing note of the times which have become more restless. That the constitution can accommodate itself to these new times, that what suited England in the Middle Ages and in early modern history suits it still in the advanced nineteenth century, shows its great flexibility, wherein lies its chief strength and success.

The Crown.

The Monarchy in England is a limited one—that is, the monarch is not, as his name implies, the sole ruler. His authority is limited or checked by other parts of the constitution. How to check the irresponsible power of the king has been the great difficulty of all nations in Europe. Some have solved this difficulty by getting rid of their kings altogether, as in France and America. But they are not much better off for this than the English. These have succeeded in retaining the Monarchy with all its usefulness and splendour, but without its absolute and mischievous tendencies. This has been the result, like most other things in the English constitution, of centuries of toil and trouble. English kings have been quite as despotically inclined as kings elsewhere, and some of them, like William the Conqueror, and Henry VIII, were quite like Oriental despots. The Crown under the Norman kings gained enormous power, which was used against the people. But the genius of the English people has always been against absolutism of any sort. The entire course of English history may be briefly described as the struggle of the people against the tyranny of the barons and especially against that of the Crown. This struggle was long and bitter. It created great ill-feeling and cost much civil bloodshed. Everything else—trade and industries and other progress—was sacrificed to this object. And the people in the end came out victorious. Under the early Plantagenets the Crown found a formidable opponent to its absolutism in the barons who succeeded in curbing its power. They

shared their success with the people who were given many valuable privileges. The most notable instance of this is the extortion of the Magna Charta from King John by the Barons. Under the later Plantagenets the barons were weakened by their internecine quarrels during the Wars of the Roses, and the Crown profited by this. The old baronage was exhausted and had almost died out when the Wars were over and the Crown passed to the Tudors.

The Tudors were all strong-minded persons, and they determined to use the advantages thus offered by the removal of the barrier raised up against them by the barons. Henry VIII and Elizabeth increased the power of the Crown greatly, because neither the barons nor the people were strong enough to resist them very effectually, and also because they were, both of them, father and daughter, very able persons, possessed of resolution and tact. But, in spite of her great ability, even Elizabeth found in the latter part of her reign that the Crown could not have it all its own way and that a new power was rapidly rising against it. Her successors, the Stuarts, had all the despotic inclination of the great Tudors without their strength and wisdom. They could not perceive that the Crown had henceforward to play a subordinate part in the constitution owing to the power of the people. One of them lost his head in the struggle for absolutism, and the family had finally to be driven from the throne and the country. With the exile of James II and the successful termination of the Revolution of 1688, the struggle of the Crown for absolute power in England may be said to have mainly terminated in its defeat. Its power was securely curbed by written laws, and since then it has exercised little direct authority. But the danger was not altogether over. Under George III, who wanted to enjoy unlimited power, the Crown again threatened to rise into mischievous and injurious importance. It could not, however, take a direct part in politics. So by indirect influence and corruption it obtained great power which was used injuriously to the advantages of the people. The chief instrument of the Crown in this work was, strange to say, the Parliament itself, the very institution which formerly was against it and on the side

of the people. But, when it came to be used in this way, the people agitated for its reform, and reformed it was. With George III the danger of the Crown ever again becoming aggressive passed away for ever. The later sovereigns happily realised their position and settled down into it. With a reformed Parliament the danger of the Crown ever again succeeding in trying to tyrannise over the people seems as far off as ever.

Early Relations of England with France.

England had come into contact with France even before the Norman Conquest. But that event brought it into direct relation with its nearest neighbour on the Continent. The new king and his chief officers were all practically Frenchmen. William was the ruler of Normandy, a part of France, and was subject to the French king. The Norman dukes had assisted in overthrowing the old Carolingian line of kings in France and in bringing in the Capetian dynasty. But when William became king of England, he became more powerful than his suzerain, the king of France, and hostility sprang up between the two. The nominal relation between the two was that of lord over his vassal, but the vassal in this case was more powerful than the suzerain. The early Norman kings were all fighting with the kings of France with varying success. The latter were always fomenting quarrels in England and helping the enemies of the king, as in the disputes with the Pope. Henry II came to possess more of France than the French king himself, and hence the jealousy of the latter increased very much. When the French king stirred up Henry's sons, Richard and John, against their father, the relations between the two countries became very bitter, and "assumed that aspect of lasting hostility that influenced all subsequent history." But when John became king, he continued the traditional policy of his house and turned against his former friend, the French king. But John was worsted in the struggle, as he had not the sympathy of his own people. England lost Normandy in 1204, and the chief connecting link between the two coun-

tries was broken. The relations between the two were entirely revolutionised by this event. The retention of Normandy had kept up the feudal relation of vassal and lord and the hostility arising from this. But now this feudal hostility ceased. The two countries pursued a separate course. The hostility henceforward was not between the suzerain and his too powerful vassal, but between two nations both conscious of their dignity and power. The feudal element in the quarrel did not altogether cease to exist, as Henry III and his successor retained Guienne. But this was a minor thing. The chief point to be noted is that hitherto the quarrel had been between the two kings, whilst henceforward the struggle lay between the two nations. Under Henry III and Edward I the quarrel continued with one important element added. This was Scotland, which, as it was fighting with Edward for its national independence, became now for the first time the ally of France, and continued this alliance for more than three centuries almost till the two crowns were united. Edward III began that long national conflict known as the Hundred Years' War, which commenced, and continued for a long time, so brilliantly, but ended so disastrously for England. The splendid successes of Edward III and of Henry V were nullified by the disastrous blunders under Henry VI, and everything was lost and given up in France by England except Calais. Under Edward IV and Henry VII the old hostility of England and France continued, though Charles VIII assisted Henry of Richmond in coming to the throne of England.

With the reign of Henry VIII a new era began in the foreign relations of England, and consequently also in the relations with France. England did not now merely continue the traditional policy of being always against France, but began to look to its own interest and to the other foreign powers with whom it came now to have closer relations. Henry allied himself with France whenever it suited his interests, and also fought with it when it did not. England had now to look to wider interests and to many countries. Henry saw his opportunity in the quarrel between France and the Emperor, and tried to profit by joining now the one

and now the other, and thus keeping what was called the balance of power. He was on the whole successful in this and kept both rivals from doing harm to his interests. Mary, owing to her Spanish marriage, went to war with France, which proved very disastrous, as England lost the very last possession on French soil, Calais. Elizabeth subordinated political considerations to religious ones and entered into a hearty national alliance of France and England against Spain. France under Henri IV, who, before he came to the throne, was a Huguenot or Protestant, became very tolerant of Protestantism and ceased from persecuting it. Spain was the great representative power of active and persecuting Catholicism. So both England and France united against it. For the next half century this union was almost always in existence owing to the hatred against Catholicism and against Spain. The first two Stuarts were on the whole well disposed towards France, war with whom was of very rare occurrence now. Oliver Cromwell reverted to the active policy of Elizabeth and allied himself with France, then under the able administration of Cardinal Mazarin, in order to overthrow the pride and power of Spain. With Louis XIV the policy of France towards England underwent a radical change, and the two countries again reverted to the ancient attitude of irreconcilable hostility. England ultimately succeeded in baffling the ambitious policy of that monarch by means of a European coalition at whose head she put herself. The relations of England with France at this and subsequent periods may form the subject of a separate essay later on.

The Feudal System in England.

The feudal system arose in Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire and the dissolution of the Empire of Charlemagne. Its essential feature was a particular kind of land tenure. Owing to the prevailing insecurity, men did not hold land as independent proprietors, but as the tenants of some powerful chief who had the power to protect them. These chiefs held their lands as from the king, who was their lord. Vassal and lord had both

privileges as well as duties to perform. As there was no regular standing army, the king granted land to his vassals in order to get back from them military service whenever required. This granting of land on condition of military service was originally the main principle of the feudal system. But later it developed into a very complex and elaborate constitutional system embracing many other doctrines and usages.

Many traces existed in the old English institutions of this system. For though England was not so much affected by the dissolution of the Carlovingian Empire as France and the Germanic countries, yet some of the tendencies at work in these latter also existed there. But feudalism was established by the Norman Conquest in a systematic manner. The Normans were thoroughly conversant with it in France, and they tried to introduce it into their Conquest. But the system underwent some important modifications, especially at the hands of William the Conqueror. By this system the feudal lords had complete and absolute power over their vassals, who were dependent solely upon them, and by whose strength they were able to control the king himself. In France this had led to anarchy, when the king was unable to check his nobles, who fought with him and with one another by the aid of their vassals. William saw the evil of this and determined to keep it out of England. He declared himself lord, not only over his barons, to whom he gave lands directly, but also over the vassals of these latter. The sovereign was made the supreme feudal lord, to whom every one who held land in the realm was made to swear allegiance. Thus he weakened the power of the barons and took away from them the chief means of rebellion and disorder. He also curtailed the feudal privilege of the barons by which they claimed to have their own courts of justice within their domains, and established one supreme court for the whole realm. The barons naturally resented all this and tried several times to regain their power. But the resolute strength of the Norman kings foiled them. Under the weak rule of Stephen alone could they get the upper hand and that for a short time. Henry II put down the final revolt of the feudal party in 1174, and

Edward I destroyed the influence which land tenure had in political matters. The barons continued to fight henceforward, but that was not for reviving their feudal privileges against the central authority of the state, but for getting this central authority into their own hands. But the Wars of the Roses destroyed the power of the barons altogether. Feudal tenures still continued for centuries till they were abolished by an Act of 1660, and the system may be said to have ended in England then. Yet a system which was so widely prevalent for such a long time cannot perish altogether without leaving prominent traces of its existence. And this has been the case with the feudal system in England. The land law to this day contains many of the old feudal principles and practices.

Thomas a Becket.

BECKET was the great and resolute champion of the Church and its power in the memorable struggle which it had with Henry II. The king had in those early days two great checks upon his absolutism—the barons and the Church. Consequently long and bitter were the struggles between him and these two powers in the realm. Each of these latter of course stood up for its own exclusive and even selfish privileges. But still they cared for general freedom and protected the people, who had no direct voice then, from kingly tyranny. This was especially the case with the Church. It was the one great champion of liberty and order against the tyranny and lawlessness of rulers in medieval Europe. Its instruments, the clergy, were thus very obnoxious to the king, who endeavoured to bring them under his complete power and thus to render them incapable of standing in his way. They enjoyed, as befitted their position as ministers of God, certain immunities from the ordinary law. One of these was that they could not be tried by the ordinary courts of law to which civilians were amenable. They had to be judged by their own ecclesiastical courts, as soldiers are brought up before courts-martial composed of military

officers. This separate jurisdiction gave rise to many abuses at the hands of the clerical judges, who were at times guilty of gross miscarriage of justice. But in principle the system was one suited to the ideas of that age, which considered the priestly class as having superior sanctity. But Henry wanted to abolish its immunity and to bring it under his jurisdiction in order to strengthen his authority, which was necessarily weakened by a rival jurisdiction. It was not owing to any burning desire of justice, but entirely to a desire to centralize and consolidate his power. The Church naturally opposed him in this the most vital point of attack upon its liberty, and in Becket found a most determined champion to uphold its cause. Judging with our modern ideas, we may say that it was intolerable that an Archbishop should so persistently thwart the highest civil authority in the kingdom. But we must remember that the Church and its chief representatives occupied a peculiar position in the polity, as the check and not, as now, the servant of the Crown. They may be said to have been like the Parliament at the present day; and the Parliament has now continuously thwarted the Crown for two centuries. Thus the opposition of Becket to the king must be viewed in the light of his age and its ideals, and not of our own. That the age was quite different from ours is emphasized by the very result of this conflict. It was Becket and his views that triumphed, and the king who yielded. And to a great extent it was well that he triumphed—well, not only for his Church, but also for England. In the conduct of the dispute Becket may have shown sometimes unnecessary harshness and even vindictiveness; he may have been influenced occasionally by personal resentment; he may have wanted tact and prudence. But that he was sincere in his belief that he was fighting the cause of righteousness and liberty against the unrighteous absolutism of the king; that he sacrificed everything to this cause, finally giving up life itself for it; that his unflinching opposition stemmed the tide of tyranny over the people as well as the clergy, can scarcely be denied. Great as he was in life, he was greater still in death. His martyrdom completed his life-task, and the abject

humiliation of the king and his surrender of what he had extorted from an unwilling nobility and clergy settled the whole point so fiercely disputed for a long time to come.

The Magna Charta.

THE granting of the Great Charter of Liberties is certainly the most important event in English history. It is the keystone of the English Constitution, the immovable basis on which has been reared the entire structure of English liberty. The constitution has no date from which we may reckon its commencement. But we may safely say that with the Great Charter its real existence began. There were other Charters granted by English kings before this, but in comparison they dwindle into insignificance. All the liberties and rights obtained in later times have their germ already in the Magna Charta. "All that has since been obtained is little more than a confirmation or commentary; and if every subsequent law were to be swept away, there would still remain the bold features that distinguish a free from a despotic monarchy." As we have seen, the constitution has grown up in a natural way. All new additions and accretions have been linked to the old in a harmonious way, so as to preserve the main characteristics of the whole. The Great Charter had its basis in that of Henry the First, and this latter is linked with earlier ones still. All the statutes about liberty enacted since are in a sense contained in the Great Charter, and they emphasize and expand particular points already granted. Thus the right of every person to be brought speedily before a court of justice to be tried, and not be detained in prison without trial, is recognised in the Great Charter. But it was more explicitly declared and confirmed by the famous statute of *Habeas Corpus* passed under Charles II.

The Great Charter was a sort of treaty between the Crown and the people, extorted by threats from the former by the Barons. The misrule and tyranny of

John had reached a pitch which raised the stern resistance of his feudal vassals, the barons, who formed a coalition to bring the king to his senses. They were ably assisted in their constitutional struggle by the church and the clergy in England, whose chief, Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, put himself at the head of this important movement. By his great ability and integrity he conducted the struggle of rescuing his country from kingly tyranny to a most successful and salutary conclusion. It was owing to his political sagacity that the barons and the clergy got what they wanted from the king. Henceforward the king could not tyrannise over his vassals, who possessed the stable security of freedom in this charter. But the most important as well as magnanimous thing was that the vassals and the dignitaries of the church did not think of themselves alone and exclusively on this memorable occasion. The people were not forgotten. What privileges they got from the king they extended to the people also. For nearly all the powers which the king had over the barons as his immediate vassals, the barons had over their vassals, the common people. And generally these vassals were much oppressed by their lords, who knew that they had not the power to resist. Hence great magnanimity was shown when they promised to do for their own vassals what they forced the king to do for themselves.

The charter consisted of several clauses. But the essential clauses—those which may be regarded as the cardinal principles of the document—are those which declare that the people cannot be taxed without representation and that the law is the same for all. It assured every free man that his person and property were absolutely secure from every kind of injury, except "through the lawful judgment of his peers or the law of the land," and the king gave a pledge that he would not sell, refuse or postpone the doing of justice to any one. The Charter being thus the most important document of English liberty, Englishmen were very anxious to have it confirmed on every important occasion by subsequent kings. And the later confirmations of it are so numerous

as to be almost beyond reckoning; for instance, fifteen are found in the reign of Edward III alone. The very day on which Charles II entered London after his Restoration he was asked to confirm the Great Charter.

England and the Crusades.

THE Crusades played a great part in the history of Europe during the later Middle Ages, and profoundly affected the countries which took part in them. Some writers thoughtlessly condemn them as the outcome of superstition and misdirected zeal, causing an enormous waste of life and energy better employed in other directions. But though they failed in their direct object of taking and keeping the Holy Land, and though they were productive of much harm and evil, no one can doubt, says a great authority, Bishop Stubbs, that they were a benefit to the world. "That in their course they brought out a love for all that is heroic in human nature, the love of freedom, the honour of prowess, sympathy with sorrow, perseverance to the last, and patient endurance without hope, the chronicles of the age abundantly prove; proving, moreover, that it was by the experience of those times that the forms of those virtues were realised and presented to posterity." They first taught the states of Europe to go beyond their narrow selfish ambitions, and to sink their individual jealousies in the common cause of Christendom. The chief and most important work of the Crusades was, however, that it checked the aggressive march of Mahomedanism, which would have affected Europe disastrously by introducing Asiatic barbarism. It is now admitted, says Professor Montagu Burrows, that the survival of any Christianity at all in Asia was due to the Crusades; that the expulsion of the Moors from Spain and Portugal was part of the movement, and that the Knights of Rhodes and Malta, whose splendid valour saved the nations of the Mediterranean, were the direct progeny of previous heroism. Though waged in comparatively rude ages and full of barbarities and enormities, the Crusades have contributed in an efficient

degree to civilization. Great impetus was given to trade and international intercourse by the coming together of the nations in these wars. Their manners became more polished and their tongues more varied by this contact.

England had not much to do with the Crusades on account of her remote and isolated position and because she had not in those times begun to take much part in European affairs. Still her Norman kings took part in many of these wars, especially Richard I, whose great zeal for religion and adventure made him neglect his kingly duties. In order to obtain funds for his Crusade, he sold charters and privileges to many towns which would not otherwise have obtained them. Though England felt the direct influences of these wars but little, she shared fully in the indirect good done by them to trade and intercourse and civilization in general.

England and Scotland.

At the present day England and Scotland are practically one country, and Englishmen and Scotchmen one people with common national interests. But there have been times when this was not the case, when the two countries were entirely separate and their peoples more inflamed by a bitter and lasting mutual hatred and enmity. Hostility with France and with Scotland is the most prominent feature of early English history.

The two kingdoms came into contact very early in history. In the tenth century Edmund of England granted Strathclyde as a fief to the king of Scotland, and the grandson of this king, Malcolm II, was given Lothian, in 1018, which had been a part of the English kingdom of Northumbria. This acquisition had a very lasting influence on the history of Scotland. Being the richest part of the kingdom, it acquired very great influence over the king, who liked its Teutonic inhabitants more than the Celts of his possessions in the North. The marriage of Malcolm III with the sister of Edgar Atheling introduced English influence still more. Thus, before the Norman Conquest, Scotland was on friendly

terms with England. But with the Norman kings there was not much of friendship at first. Those Englishmen who were displaced by the Conquest were well received in Scotland and given grants of land. Malcolm invaded England several times and succeeded in causing much havoc. But at length William was aroused to invade Scotland in retaliation, and he compelled Malcolm to own him his over-lord or suzerain. This submission was the ground of the claim which later English kings urged against the Scotch as being the suzerain of their whole kingdom. Under the sons of Malcolm very friendly relations subsisted between the two countries, which were strengthened by the marriage of his daughter with Henry I. Many Norman barons were given lands in Scotland into which the feudal system was introduced. The friendship was interrupted for a time by William the Lion's war, which only resulted in his humiliation and in his agreeing to hold his kingdom as a fief from the English king. This was succeeded by a century of friendship and peace, during which Scotland was very prosperous. This was broken by the stormy period which followed on the death of the grandchild and heir of the Scottish king, Margaret. Several claimants appeared for the crown, and Edward I, being appointed arbiter between them, chose Baliol. The latter afterwards rebelled against the English king, who had made him swear fealty and homage to him, and thus gave a long-sought opportunity to him to interfere in Scottish affairs. This he did effectually by invading that country and putting it under English administration. The Scotch people rebelled against this under their national hero and patriot, Wallace, who however was defeated and executed by the English. But they made another attempt under Bruce and succeeded as the great English king died just as he was about to enter Scotland and was succeeded by his weak son, under whom that country regained its independence on the famous field of Bannockburn. This struggle for independence was a long and very bitter one and left lasting traces behind in the persistent hatred with which the Scotch henceforth for centuries regarded the English. It also led to the alliance with France, which forms a prominent feature of later Scotch history. Whenever England was at war with

her neighbour beyond the Channel, she was attacked by her Northern enemy across the border and thus prevented from using her full force against the former. This distrust of England and reliance on France were the guiding principles of Scotch foreign policy till the Reformation. That momentous event brought about a change in the attitude of Scotland towards the two great powers. With their change of religion the Scotch ceased to ally themselves with the Catholic French and came to have sympathy with the English. The country was split up into two great parties: the Catholics looked to France for aid, while the Reformers called in the English. Elizabeth kept Mary of Scot, who was a Catholic, a prisoner for a long time and ultimately executed her, thus helping the Reform party to rule and keep the kingdom in peace. After Elizabeth's death, the English crown passed to James, the king of Scotland, and thus the countries were nominally united under one king. But it really took a long time for the people to unite into one nation. For a considerable period they continued to be separate, having even conflicting interests. The legislative union of 1707 well nigh put a stop to this by bringing Scotland closer and allowing her to share in the privileges and prosperity of the richer kingdom. Still even so late as the beginning of the reign of George III the Scotch were held in contempt by the English as may be seen from the episode of the Earl of Bute. But during the present century the two peoples have entirely forgotten their old animosities and have become one British nation. To this desirable and salutary result our present Queen and her family may be said to have contributed in no small degree.

England and Ireland.

Ireland came in contact with England first in the reign of Henry II. That country had been a prey to the feuds of its various native chiefs, and one of these called in the aid of the English king to restore him to power. Henry sent over some of his Norman nobles, and they succeeded in quieting all the other chiefs

They were so very successful indeed that Henry was afraid lest they should found a separate Norman kingdom there. He, therefore, went over himself in person and made them swear fealty to him as their suzerain. He thus introduced the feudal law, which was quite unknown there. Many of the native chiefs too did him feudal homage without knowing fully the obligations they thereby incurred. The Irish had their own peculiar system called Breton law by which the tribesmen elected their chief. But the English refused to acknowledge this on the plea that the feudal law regulated their relations. This conflict between the two systems—the one to which the people wanted to cling and the other which was wanted to be imposed upon them by the English—is the true explanation of the subsequent relations of the two races. A strange transformation came over the Norman conquerors of the country, and they grew more savage than the natives, with whom they first were at war, but later on allied themselves. No good thus came of Henry's conquest of Ireland. On the contrary there was worse anarchy since than before, and the English influence almost entirely vanished. Richard II made an attempt to remedy this by vigorous action. He landed a strong force, defeated the chiefs, and received their submission. But soon after his departure all traces of English success were obliterated, and the former lawless state recurred. This continued till the reign of Henry VIII, who was determined to subjugate Ireland and bring its defiant chiefs to submission. He succeeded in this and reduced the whole country. The native chiefs were won over by a conciliatory but firm policy and the land secured on the way to subside into peace and order. But unfortunately for it religious strife took the place of civil strife during the Reformation. Henry unwisely attempted to foist his new Protestantism on the unwilling Irish, who were, and determined to remain, staunch Catholics. This religious difference embittered the feelings of the two countries. Under Elizabeth, Ireland was chosen by her enemies, the Catholic powers of Europe, as the ground on which she can be easily worsted. A Spanish force was landed, but the invasion ended in failure. The power of England was more firmly established than ever. Owing to the

terrorism that prevailed, several rebellions broke out, each put down of course, but each costing enormous trouble and increasing the already great unpleasant relations between the two nations. That of 1641 was the most terrible, and the struggle that followed it was horrible and barbarous in the extreme: nearly half the population perished in eleven years. The period of the Commonwealth under Cromwell, the Restoration, and the Revolution of 1688 were all alike disastrous to Ireland and its old chiefs, who received the final blow in the war which followed the last event. James II retired to Ireland to make a stand for his crown there, but he was defeated and all his followers suffered terribly. The Catholic faith was bitterly persecuted by means of penal legislation. Trade and industries languished, and famine and disease became chronic. The whole eighteenth century is marked by bitter disputes and jealousies between the Irish parliament and the English, and by the gross corruption and incapacity of its statesmen. Disgusted with this state of things, Pitt abolished the separate parliament at Dublin by the Act of Union at the beginning of this century and thereby hoped to pacify the country. But Ireland has never ceased since from troubling England, which, though weary, has not been allowed to rest, and in whose side it may be considered a veritable thorn. During the last few years it has been the most anxious object of English politics, engrossing all attention to itself and retarding progress in other directions.

The Greatest of the Plantagenets.

Edward I has been called with truth and justice "the Greatest of the Plantagenets," and his claims to be thus regarded are based on solid achievements. "No rulers of England," says Professor Tout in his recent monograph on him, "save William the Conqueror, Henry II, Henry VIII, and Cromwell, can be compared with him, either as regards force of character and strength of intellect, or as regards the greatness and the permanence of their influence on the history

of our land." The task which he found to do at his accession was of an arduous nature, and such as required a man of wisdom and goodness as well as strength of character to do it. Edward had these qualities and accomplished the task. It was to reduce Wales, and to manage the disturbed affairs of Scotland; to effect legislative and military reforms and put the laws and the army of the country on a sound and solid basis; to curb the power of the Church in political affairs; to restrain the ascendancy of the Barons whose power was overshadowing that of the Crown. But, above all, his most memorable work was to develop and strengthen representative institutions by accepting the principles of the charters and the lessons of his father's reign. He tried to take the people themselves into partnership with him in the work of administration, and thus rightly and wisely to widen and strengthen the hold of the sovereign on the nation. He first saw the great benefit of having the throne "broad-based on the people's will." Up to his time the Barons were considered the only checks upon Royalty. But under his father they had shown their excessive power against the Crown as well as against the people. The Oxford Parliament had set up a selfish rule of the Barons which was humiliating to the king and oppressive to the nation at large. In the conflict between them and the king, the necessity was seen of taking the representatives of the people, the lesser landholders, the merchants and traders of the town, into partnership and confidence in the task of government. Earl Simon is supposed to be the first to see this when he called the famous Parliament of 1265. But Edward had seen the good of this policy even earlier. During his reign he pursued this policy of trusting to the people steadily and honestly. It is true the first Parliament was called in his father's reign. But that was done from interested motives. It was the temporary expedient of a king in need of money, or the last despairing effort of a revolutionary partisan who thereby hoped to be irresistible to the Crown. Edward, on the other hand, was the first to make Parliament a permanent and ordinary part of the machinery of English Government. He is in this sense the real father of Parliament and the creator of the historical

English Constitution. The principle of representation was being slowly recognised throughout the thirteenth century. John was compelled to call an assembly of representatives from every shire. Four knights from every shire had been called out by the ministers in 1254. Simon had added two burgesses from each of certain boroughs to his Parliament of 1265. But it was Edward who completed this process by successive steps in 1275, 1282, 1290, 1294 and 1295, till the "Model Parliament" of this last year was a real representative body in the full sense of the word. The national parliamentary constitution took under his auspices "the shape and form which it retained with but little variation until the Revolution of 1688, and even, so far as externals went, until the Reform Bills of the present century, following the true spirit of Edward, recast the old institution to reach new and changed necessities." He determined that burgesses should sit with shire-knights,—a point on which the whole history of the House of Commons and its indestructibility are rightly said to turn. He also insisted on the representation of the Clergy as one of the three great estates of the realm, and on all the three estates meeting and deliberating at the same time and place. The Clergy did not long retain their position in Parliament, and in the end belonged to it only in a subordinate way. The estate of the Nobles was much controlled by Edward, who reduced the number of the House of Lords by calling only those whom he liked to attend its meetings, thus emphasising the principle that Peerage depended not on tenure, but only on the royal will, whose word of summons could alone give a Baron a right to be a member of the House.

It was indeed Edward's general aim, as defined by Bishop Stubbs, to eliminate the principle of tenure from the region of government. His legal reforms tended in the direction of overthrowing feudalism, and several statutes enacted in his reign, especially that of 1290, called *Quia emptores*, opened the way to changes which finally destroyed it in the land. His judicial reforms were beneficial. He dismissed most of the judges for corruption about the middle of his reign to make room

for better ones. His banishment of the Jews was not a mere outburst of bigotry, but was owing to his determination to enforce laws against excessive interest, and to destroy an agency by which the powerful dispossessed the smaller landowners, such as the Jews had become. He defined the Assize Circuits, and provided new forms of legal remedy to meet the growth of legal business, and so laid the foundation for the great equity jurisdiction in Chancery. He effected several military reforms too, especially that of calling on all classes alike, without the old caste restriction of tenure, to fight for the country whenever and wherever required.

His peaceful work was thus very great and marks an epoch in English history. It would have been greater still had he enjoyed greater leisure from foreign wars. He was continuously embroiled in war with his neighbours in Wales and across the northern border in Scotland. Wales he conquered and made a permanent part of his kingdom. But, though he had the sagacity to see the great benefit that would accrue to both countries from a union with Scotland, he could not bring that about. He achieved successes there, but his object failed. He could not subdue the country. No sooner was one rising suppressed and he turned his back, than another was there to call him again. After his death Scotland went altogether out of England's hand and power to be independent, and to be a thorn in its side by being the ally of its great enemy, for more than two centuries and a half. But in spite of his failure he remains one of the greatest of English kings, even in his foreign relations with the other powers of Europe. He must have been truly great when, in the words of his biographer, all Europe welcomed him as the mediator of peace, when his friendship was sought by every power of Western Europe, and when he made the name of England respected and feared in Germany, in France, in Spain, and in Italy. Such a king really deserves to be called not only the greatest of his race, but one of the greatest of the whole line of English sovereigns.

The Reign of Edward III.

The reign of Edward III is important in several ways in English history. To a superficial observer who has an eye for the picturesque and the marvellous, the most noticeable thing in this reign would be its long-continued but futile warfare, and its military brilliancy and renown. There was war with Scotland, England's habitual enemy then, undertaken to force upon the people a Baliol instead of a Bruce,—instead of the favourite of the nation, a nominee and tool of its enemy. There was war with Spain waged in order to seat a cruel and detested tyrant on its throne. But the greatest and most brilliant, though also most futile, was the war with France begun unjustly, carried on without principle and purpose, and ended in loss and disaster. The ostensible purpose of joining the crowns of England and France on his own head was rightly frustrated. But Edward succeeded in the purpose with which he engaged in the conflict, and obtained personal renown and amusement out of it. As has been well observed by Mr. Freeman, he made war like a knight-errant; war was a noble pastime for princes and nobles; the whole thing, from beginning to end, reads like a long tournament carried on for the amusement and glory of a few at the expense of suffering millions. Great victories were won, and the English king and the nobility were covered with glory. Cressy and Calais, Poitiers and Navarette have immortalized the king and his son, and were achievements of which the nation was proud. But they were barren of any substantial advantages and served no useful purpose. In spite of these great single victories, England lost enormously by the struggle. "The broad and plain fact of Edward's reign is that it was a time of great territorial losses. As far as glory consists in winning wonderful battles and leading foreign kings captive, no other age in English history was equally glorious. But at no other time, save that of Henry the Sixth, was England ever so thoroughly stripped of possessions which had once been hers." Edward lost at the end of his reign nearly the whole of his hereditary possessions of Aquitaine, and had only

the conquest of Calais to set off against this heavy loss and disgrace. Thus even the external splendour which surrounded the reign for a long time vanished towards its close.

But this reign is of much greater importance for reasons which, though silent and not so prominent and dazzling as its foreign wars, had in reality far greater effect on the prosperity of the country and the subsequent course of events. The constitutional importance is very great. Though Parliament had been established for seventy years before the accession of Edward, yet it was only during his reign that it first dared to oppose the executive, and by thus exercising its legitimate power, it compelled, for the first time, a king of England to desist from illegal tyranny. Edward's wars made him stand in constant need of money, and money he could get only from Parliament. Hence he had to call it frequently, almost annually. It gradually learnt its power, and used it against the royal tyranny till the culminating point was reached in the last two years of the reign, when what is called the Good Parliament carried some of the most thorough measures of reform and made one of the most successful attacks on the executive Government that any legislative body had ever made. In this good work the Black Prince helped it very effectually, and it is for thus putting himself at the head of a real popular movement at a critical juncture that he deserves to be gratefully remembered in history, and not for his undoubted, though futile, deeds of chivalry. From the point of view of commerce and industry, the period is of vast importance. Edward has been called by Hallam "the Father of English Commerce," on account of the great progress which it made, and the recognition of its importance by him as shewn by his commercial legislation which was on the whole beneficial according to the lights of those times. Though he did not originate woollen manufactures in England, yet he so encouraged and fostered them, especially by inducing the Flemish, the best weavers in Europe, to come over and settle in the country, that quite a new era in the history of those manufactures began in his reign. Special commercial parliaments

were called to advise the king in these matters and legislation was based on their advice. A revolution was effected in social matters by the terrible plague, known as the Black Death, which frightfully depopulated the country. Labourers became scarce and wages consequently rose higher. Though laws were made to put down wages, yet things began to take their natural course, and from this reign may be dated the struggle that continued till our days, when it has taken a very serious form, between capital and labour, between the employers and the employed. This reign is also distinguished by the religious labours of Wyclif who heralded the revolt against the established religious system, which a century and a half later changed the whole face of this country for all time; and by the literary efforts of Chaucer who began the long roll of English men of letters and opened the real history of English literature. The personal characters of the king and his son had, however, little to do with all these momentary movements and changes in the constitution, in commerce, in religion, and in literature. They directly took part only in the wars, and shared in the glory obtained therein. This renown indeed blinds popular estimation to their great faults. But as is said by the judicious historian of this reign, Mr. Longman, we must not be dazzled "by the splendour of the victories they gained, into a blind forgetfulness of their vanity, or into an unreflecting admiration of two men, who, though possessed of qualities particularly qualified to excite the admiration of unthinking hero-worshippers, have but little claim to the commendation of the wise and thoughtful."

Chaucer.

The early literature of England was chiefly historical and consisted of chronicles written by monks in a dry uninteresting style. In the twelfth century Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote the chronicle of the early British kings, in which he gave the romantic account of king

Arthur, who henceforward became the great mythical hero of England, inspiring great literary efforts down to our own days, as may be seen from Tennyson's beautiful series of Arthurian Legends. There were writers like Layamon, Owen, Roger, Bacon, and a few others who kept up literature in the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth centuries. But by the middle of the latter century a great and complete change had come over English life and the English language and literature. The Norman and the English, the conquerors and the conquered, had by this time been completely fused into one nation, emphatically the English people. With this national unity had come also national freedom and greatness. The Parliament had successfully asserted its right to be heard on all matters of national well-being, and to regulate the course of civil administration. Trade and commerce, industry, manufactures and agriculture advanced rapidly. The national mind was awakened to nobler earnestness in religious matters, and the movement under Wyclif was the result. In social and economic matters a slow but steady change was coming over the old feudal state of things. While crowning all, and in outward splendour surpassing them all, was the military renown obtained by England in France during the war of Edward III. The newly-welded nation was thus in the first flush of its vigour and glory. And it is but natural that we should find this reflected in the national literature. Whenever the nation has been roused deeply in political and religious matters, there has always been a corresponding outburst of literary activity in it. We see this in the Elizabethan Age, the most splendid period in English literary history. We see it in the Age of Anne, and in our own time, the glorious Age of Victoria. So it was in the age of Edward III, a period renowned for its political and religious, as well as literary, activity. The English language had now prevailed over the foreign French everywhere in the country, even among the nobler classes, and in the reign of Edward's successor it was to achieve its final triumph by taking the place of its rival in official intercourse. Literature benefited much by this universal use of the language, and great writers

arose to compose works in it. Hitherto the influence of the French Romances was great on the vernacular English literature, which contained long and cumbersome fanciful works modelled on them. The new writers, however, turned to more serious pursuits having greater connection with actual human life. They were Chaucer, Langland, Gower, and Wyclif. Langland and Wyclif were imbued with religious earnestness, and wrote feelingly on the current abuses. Gower made use of allegory for the purpose of moral teaching. Chaucer was the most human of the four, his work describing actual living life in a graphic manner. He was not influenced by the extravagant unreal romantic literature of France, but by the new and vigorous literary spirit which was then rising in Italy. The revival of learning and the fine arts which was taking place in Italy in the fourteenth century had a great influence on Chaucer, who had visited that country in his early years and was inspired by its great literary men like Dante and Boccaccio and Petrarch. He was a man of the world, having travelled abroad, resided at courts, fought on the battle-field, and engaged in business. Having seen life in its various phases, he describes it with humour and pathos and, above all, dramatic force in his great poem of the "Canterbury Tales." The story of that immortal poem is that of a pilgrimage from London to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. The pilgrims are thirty in number and represent every class of English society from the highest to the lowest—from the noble to the ploughman. They appear as real living characters, and not mere figures in allegories as in earlier poems. His creative and dramatic power comes up to Shakspere's, and is the first revelation in English literature of this kind of richness. For a knowledge of English life and manners in the fourteenth century the "Canterbury Tales" are invaluable, as they preserve the broad as well as minute traits of life which otherwise would have been completely lost to us. Chaucer is the first of English poets, the head of a long and renowned line which has run for five centuries after him and is running still as fresh and vigorous as ever. But for more than a century after him there was no other poet in English literature. English poetry first burst into splendid exist-

ence with him, but for a long time seemed to have died with him too. This was chiefly because the age which succeeded the splendid age or Edward III was one of the most gloomy and barren periods in English history, unrelieved by any act of greatness.

Wyclif.

About the middle of the fourteenth century the Church had come to lose much of the respect in which it was held, especially owing to the compulsory stay of its head, the Pope, at Avignon in France, where he was dependent on the French king. There were many abuses in the Church administration of England. The priests held vast possessions and had grown more or less worldly and forgetful of their duties. The people resented this, and there are many traces in literature of the ridicule poured upon the clergy and especially the friars. In the remarkable poem called the "Vision of Piers," the "Ploughman," and in the "Canterbury Tales" of Chaucer the monks are treated with scant respect. But all the latent anger of the age against the evil practices of the Church found its full vent and voice in the bold Oxford theologian, who has been called the first English Reformer and Protestant, John Wyclif. He was a learned man and imbued with religious earnestness which made him shrink from, and cry out against, the prevailing abuses. At first he confined himself to pointing out in very violent terms the encroachment of the Papal power in England and to exposing the faults of the clergy. He expounded the theory that God, the universal Lord of the earth, had given all royal power to rulers here directly as to his vassals, who were dependent immediately on Him alone, and that the Pope had nothing whatever to do with this temporal power of rulers. This was a blow to the Papal authority, which in those days was generally held to be above that of temporal rulers. Wyclif also held that man can deal directly with God and that there was no necessity of the mediation of priests and other agency. These were startling doctrines

then, and were fiercely opposed by the clergy, who saw that their object was to render them and the entire Church thoroughly dependent on the State. Wyclif had the interested support of the party of the Duke of Lancaster, who wanted, for their selfish purposes, to bring about ecclesiastical reform. He was protected by them against attacks from the priesthood. But Wyclif went much further than his condemnation of the practices of the church. He impugned later some of the most fundamental doctrines and dogmas of the Catholic faith; for instance, that known as the doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that the consecrated elements cease entirely after consecration to be bread and wine and become the actual body and blood of Christ, and nothing else. In order to spread his new opinions he wanted to enlighten the people in their own language and wrote excellent English tracts, which are the first compositions in English prose, of which Wyclif may justly be called the father as his contemporary Chaucer is called the father of English poetry. His great work is his translation of the Bible into English, which is the first complete English version. He was a learned theologian and philosopher, and wrote, like the other learned men of his day, treatises in Latin on doctrina and controversial matters. These had a great influence and authority, especially on the continent, where some of the greatest Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century, like Huss, were converted and inspired by them. Wyclif was personally of a very earnest and religious bent of mind and led a pure and spotless life, though in his zeal for reform he often was intemperate and vehement in his denunciation. He had to undergo severe trials, but was never persecuted, and died a natural death at an advanced age in his own Church. The movement which he inaugurated did not thrive for a long time after, and his followers, known as Lollards, were cruelly persecuted and burnt. But he had sown the seed of the great revolution which came a century and a half after him. He may be said to have prepared the way for the Reformation in England, of which he is properly called the Morning Star.

England and the Papacy.

England necessarily came in very close contact with the Papacy, the great central power of Europe, wielding its excellently organised spiritual authority in every country of Christendom, and holding kings and their temporal power in check. It was directly from Rome that England got Christianity, and later, when in the seventh century it adopted the Roman system of ecclesiastical administration, it was brought directly within the circle of Western civilization, whereby it profited immensely. The political union of the country, too, was rendered possible—nay, the idea of it was suggested by the admirable harmony and union which prevailed in the Roman Church. The Papacy wielded enormous power in those early days even in matters which had no direct connection with spiritual affairs. But it used this power on the side of civilization and humanity at a time when these were in their infancy and in great danger from the savage lawlessness of kings and nobles. The great feudal barons cared little for thought and enlightenment and still less for morality. Selfishness, brutality, and obscurantism were the prevailing traits in their character. "It is hardly possible for us," says a historian known for his sobriety and judgment, Dr. Gardiner, "even in imagination to conceive a danger to modern civilization similar in kind to that which threatened the men of the eleventh century from feudal brutality, with its contempt for mental thought and its hatred of the bonds of morality." It was the Church, as represented by the central compact power of the Papacy, that stood up throughout those dark times for civilization and knowledge against royal and feudal barbarity and tyranny. When the people were entirely neglected by the civil authority, except for purposes of extortion, they were cared for, and looked after, by the Church. The clergy taught the people and even provided for their amusement by getting up sacred plays to be acted before them. People, in return, respected them and stood for their privileges when the State threatened them.

The Church thus occupied a very important position in medieval society and discharged a great function as a rival of the state, controlling its vagaries. It was a proud position this—the vicegerent of God upon earth standing up for the rights of oppressed subjects against powerful tyrants. The greatest of medieval Popes, Hildebrand, carried this to its greatest height and raised the Papacy to a point which it would have been well for Europe if it had always maintained throughout the Middle Ages. To perform their task of resisting the absolutism of the king effectually, the Popes tried to render the clergy as independent as possible of the State and to keep them in the closest connection with Rome, whose orders they were to follow implicitly and without hindrance. This aim must not be judged and condemned according to our modern ideas regarding Church and State. "Such an arrangement," says the authority already quoted, "would be most objectionable in the nineteenth century; but it does not follow that it was not an object for which good men might reasonably contend in the eleventh century." Great and good men like Anselm and Becket and Langton contended for this, and it cannot be said that they were all wrong-headed. The Papacy often abused its power for selfish and unworthy purposes; often it required to be checked and resisted. But, as is well put by the late thoughtful and eloquent Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. Church, "this is no reason why at the time it should not have been the best, perhaps even the only, defence of the greatest interest of mankind against the immediate pressure of the tyrannies and selfishness of the time. If anything else could then have taken its place in those days, the history of Europe has not disclosed it;" so vitally important and indispensable was the work which the Papacy had to do. It did this work in its time. Now the same work needs not to be done to such an extent, chiefly because the Papacy did it so well formerly; or, if it is to be done, it is done by other agencies. But this is no reason why we should be unmindful of the claims of an institution which has deserved well of Europe.

The Wars of the Roses.

The long and bloody dynastic civil struggle which is known in history by this name was outwardly a contest between the rival claims of the families of York and Lancaster to the throne. The Wars lasted for thirty years with one long break of twelve between, and were so bloody and disastrous that in one single battle more Englishmen are said to have fallen than had perished in the field in the entire warfare in France during the previous forty years. It is not probable that, if other causes besides the family feud had not operated, all this trouble and disaster would have been borne by the country. But there were many such causes. The reigning house of Lancaster had become thoroughly unpopular owing to the English reverses and disgrace in France. There was discontent with the social and political state of affairs which broke out in the Peasants' Rising. People complained about the corrupt way in which parliaments were elected and about their meeting very rarely. Lawlessness reigned in the land, and the central authority was powerless to check it. To add to this, the house of Lancaster sided with the Church, which had grown to be disliked by the people and persecuted the reform party of the Lollards. All these causes combined to make the ruling family thoroughly disliked. The rival House of York took advantage of this and promised improvement if a change were made in the dynasty. It proved, however, quite like the other, though, for selfish purposes, it espoused for a time the cause of political and religious reform.

These wars were not the wars of the people, but mainly those of the nobles. Of course, those among the people who were the vassals of the nobles were necessarily implicated. But the great body of the people kept aloof, and were not affected by them. The newly-rising trading and shop-keeping classes and the professions merely looked on without taking any part. The nobles who had engaged in this internecine struggle out of mutual jealousy and restlessness, since, by the

close of the French War, they had lost an outlet for their military energy, were allowed to fight it out among themselves, and to harm as few as possible beyond their own class. And fight they did to the bitter end, till their ancient class was almost entirely destroyed and hardly any survivors left. This extinction of the barons was the most important result of the wars, and one which affected the whole course of subsequent history. The barons had stood up against the tyranny of the Crown under the Plantagenets and asserted the liberties of the people. But henceforward under the Tudors there was no such class, as the new nobles were all created by the king and were subservient to his will. This was all the more unfortunate as the Tudor monarchs were all inclined to absolutism. Thus the Crown profited very materially, and the despotism of the Tudor monarchs was rendered possible by this result of the Wars of the Roses. The people also profited by the wars inasmuch as they had taken very little part in them and had time given them to thrive. Their power steadily grew, and though under the Tudors it had not yet become so great as to take the place of the old barons as a barrier against the absolutism of the Crown, yet under the next dynasty it was able to assert itself most effectually.

England's Religion.

RELIGION has been always a great factor in English history. Its religion has coloured the whole course of the history of the land. It has entered into every department of life and activity, has influenced it and been influenced in its turn by it. It is thus impossible to follow intelligently the course of historical events in England without knowing something about its religion and the various phases through which it has passed. It is almost equally impossible to study properly and appreciate English literature without being acquainted with the religion that runs through it all and has inspired some of its noblest efforts. As regards the history and thought

of the present age, which is not so much ruled by religious ideas, it is impossible to know and follow them without studying religion. How much more then with regard to former times and the Middle Ages especially, when religion dominated over everything else and towered above all other interests. Religious history forms a large part of the history of the English people, because it formed and forms a large part of their life. It has always been a living active thing among them, a thing to think about and to fight for and to make sacrifices over. Religion is active and vital even now when so many other new interests have been created. The great philanthropic efforts of Englishmen in other lands, the abolition of slavery and the preaching of Christianity among the heathens throughout the world, show that the religious spirit is still strong among them. Owing to this strong religious sense of the people, religion has always been directly connected with the government. There has always been a state church, and this has been well for both the church and the state. The state derives a sort of sanctity in the eyes of the people from its connection with religion. The church obtains additional strength and respect by being supported by the government. The state has been always anxious in England to be connected with the church. But it has always tried to be connected, not on terms of equality, but as a principal to a subordinate, and in the end it has succeeded. The entire struggle with the Papacy in early English history was undertaken with this desire to subordinate the church. But the church in England was then powerful to resist the state, as it derived great strength from its close connection with Rome and the Catholic church then prevalent in Europe. The state hence tried to sever this connection and to make it independent of Rome. Henry VIII and Elizabeth did that, and, by making it independent of any external authority, made the church thoroughly dependent on the state. The doctrine that the sovereign is the head of the church shows its entire subservience to politics; for now not even the sovereign is in reality the head of the church, but the prime minister is the real head. The leader of the party which is the strongest for the time being appoints all the highest digni-

taries of the church by dispensing the patronage of the crown. Hence Conservatives, Liberals, Radicals have all had opportunities of filling the episcopal bench with their followers.

The Middle Ages in England.

THE Wars of the Roses close the Middle Ages in England, and we may here briefly characterize medieval English history. The popular notion of the Middle Ages in England as well as on the Continent, as obtained from the romances of Sir Walter Scott and others, is, on the whole, favourable to them, being based chiefly on the picturesque aspect which they present. They are the ages of chivalry, of ideal heroism, of picturesque castles and glorious churches and pageants, camps and tournaments, lovely charity and gallant self-sacrifice. They are the ages of the Crusades, which, originating in religious zeal, were productive of great and lasting benefits at the cost of immense suffering. They are also the ages of faith, when people's belief in the next world was stronger than it is this; when the Church was more powerful than the State on which it served as a check; when religion dominated over all the concerns of life; the ages of great saints and popes, of monks and doctors of the Church, of grand cathedrals and monasteries, nobly built and richly endowed. But there are around them "the dark shadows of dynastic faction, bloody conquest, grievous misgovernance, local tyrannies, plague and famines unhelped and unaverted, hollowness of pomp, disease and dissolution." They are the ages of darkness, when the lamp of learning and science was flickering till it almost was quenched, when the traditions of European scholarship were kept up mainly by the Arab followers of the new faith of Islam. Though they were the ages when the nobles flourished, they were the period of the poverty, ignorance, and dependence of the people. Brilliant knights and gorgeous pageants, huge castles and lofty cathedrals, are but the splendid surface which covered a good deal of what was far from splendid and attractive.

In England the Middle Ages partook much less of this general character than on the Continent, partly on account of the insular position of the country and partly on account of the character of the people. Their great outward splendour and gorgeousness was not so prominent there, equally with their absolutism and cruelty, observed in the other countries of Europe. The period is of great importance in English history, especially as it is one of growth and development. The foundations of English liberty were then laid, and the English Constitution was then defined in its broad outlines and features. There are not, according to Hallam, any essential privileges of Englishmen, any fundamental securities against arbitrary power so far as they depend upon positive institution which may not be traced to the time when the House of Plantagenet filled the English throne. Parliament, the great bulwark of political freedom, came into definite existence then, and received an impress which it has always subsequently retained amidst all changes. There were free institutions also in other countries in Europe. But they all languished and scarcely any survived the Middle Ages. The crown in those countries emerged from the medieval into the modern period with greater and more absolute power and with fewer checks from the people. The Middle Ages were the graves of nearly all European constitutions. In England alone free institutions not only survived, but entered upon the modern period with greater vigour and independence. "It is scarcely too much to say," writes Bishop Stubbs, who has written the best Constitutional History of England during the Middle Ages, "that English history during these ages is the history of the birth of true political liberty. It was in England alone that the problem of national self-government was practically solved."

Throughout English history, from the Conquest to the Tudors, we can trace the continuous growth, albeit at times retarded and stopped, of political liberty and constitutional government. There was generally a tendency to obtain a balance of the forces in the State, *viz.*, the crown and the three estates of the barons, the clergy and the people. When one or the other of these

grew too powerful, the rest combined against it. During the period from the Conquest to the Great Charter, it may be said that the barons were too powerful, and the crown, the clergy, and the commons combined against them. In the next period, that from the Charter to the Revolution of 1399, the crown became aggressive. Hence the barons and the commons united to check it, the clergy not taking any important part owing to their connection with the changing policy of the Papacy. During the fifteenth century the royal house and the barons were divided among themselves in the disastrous civil wars of York and Lancaster. The people were indifferent and allowed the barons to fight it out among themselves. The result was a sort of political suicide which was, however, averted by the Tudor accession; and the restoration of the national balance was rendered possible again. The later part of the Middle Ages in England was much poorer than the grand conceptions of the earlier part. Before their close they shrunk into insignificance. "The sun of the Plantagenet went down in clouds and thick darkness, the coming of the Tudors gave as yet no promise of light; it was as the morning spread upon the mountains, darkest before the dawn." That dawn was approaching. But it was accompanied by the religious storm of the Reformation through which England had to pass like all Europe before the bright and clear day of the modern period could be reached.

Henry VII.

THE accession of Henry VII marks an important epoch in English history. The Middle Ages, which are variously supposed to have ended in Europe—with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the invention of printing, or the discovery of America—may be said to have really ended in England with the close of the Wars of the Roses and the accession of the House of Tudor. The old state of things had completely changed, and a new order was taking its place everywhere. Society, based on feudalism, was passing away, and that founded

on property and industry was coming into existence. In religion the great strife between the old established church and the new ideas of protest and reform was soon to arise and change the whole face of the country for all succeeding times. Henry's reign was the transition time between the medieval and the modern periods. And he was well fitted to be the guide of such a time by his caution as well as sagacity and prudence. His reign really rendered possible, and prepared the way for, the great things that were to come in the reign of his son. He collected the means, pecuniary and others, which were spent so splendidly by his son to raise England to the rank of a great European power, to be the arbiter between the Emperor and the French king, and to bid defiance to the Pope.

The great task of Henry VII was to restore order and peace to the country. The wars had bred lawlessness and anarchy to a great extent, and the people were very anxious for peace and quiet. The new king seemed determined to give them this, and they hailed him as their saviour and supported his policy, though they found out his absolutist tendency. They had experienced the horrors of anarchy so well that they even preferred despotism to it. Henry completed the ruin of the already shattered nobility and thereby removed the greatest check on the royal authority. The people aided him in this, not knowing that they were thereby harming themselves. The House of Lords was thinned and its power jealously watched and curbed. The House of Commons was packed with the king's tools. Even such a subservient and weak Parliament Henry called but rarely,—only seven times in his long reign. He gathered together enormous sums of money by benevolences and other ingenious devices, and governed independently of the Parliament, as he was rich enough to disregard it. Indeed, his avarice and greed of money were his greatest weakness and the one blot on his character. But the people, who were groaning under his exorbitant taxes and benevolences, were also prospering under the peace and rest which his reign gave them for the first time after nearly a century of foreign as well as civil wars. They were rising in trade and industry,

and were making money; and though they grumbled, as is usual under taxation, they knew that it was the reign of the greedy king that rendered their money-making possible.

Henry's foreign policy was beneficial to the country and raised its importance. He brought Scotland into closer connection with England, and it was owing to the marriage of his daughter Margaret to the Scottish king that the union of the two crowns was brought about a century later. By prudent marriages and alliances he won a strong position among European powers and secured the friendship of Spain and Austria. Without fighting a single battle he furthered English interests abroad and made himself respected. He was the first, thus, to bring England into general European politics, with the brilliant results that appeared later when Wolsey and Henry VIII pursued their far-seeing foreign policy.

Cardinal Wolsey.

WOLSEY was the last of the great Churchmen who have exercised considerable influence over politics in England, the last of a race which included Anselm and Becket, Lanfranc and Langton. The peculiar state of political society in Medieval Europe rendered this possible. But with Wolsey that state disappeared, and society was reconstituted on an entirely different basis after the Reformation. Wolsey's latest and best biographer justly calls him probably the greatest political genius whom England has ever produced. For, says Bishop Creighton, at a great crisis of European history he impressed England with a sense of her own importance, and secured for her a leading position in European affairs, which since his days has seemed her natural right. His greatest claim to the gratitude of his country was his successful foreign policy. He found England a third-rate state in Europe without any weight in continental councils, and he left it a first-class power, holding the balance between powers like France and the Empire, and finding its alliance courted and its hostility dreaded.

by states which formerly despised it. A century of weakness and anarchy, the feeble rule of Henry VI, and the wars of the Roses, had made England lose all the little weight it had in European politics. Henry VII had neither the time nor the means and inclination to interfere in these. Wolsey was the first to obtain for his country a high place in European politics. He realised the state of affairs on the continent, and saw England's opportunity of rising. France and Spain, the Empire and the Papacy were all pursuing their rival and conflicting interests without any heed of England which was considered to be almost without the comity of nations. By his diplomacy and sagacity he made England exercise its influence as a mediator holding the rival powers in check. England was well fitted for this by its insular position which does not easily expose it to attack from the other powers. Henry VIII later developed Wolsey's policy more fully and succeeded to a greater extent, though his object was more selfish than his. Wolsey may be blamed by some for thus interfering in foreign affairs and embroiling England in continental chicanery and intrigue. There are some who hold even at the present day that England had best leave the continent alone and pursue its own commercial ends quietly. But it is doubtful whether even if England were to leave Europe alone, Europe would leave it alone. Moreover, commercial supremacy follows and is dependent on political supremacy. Her present proud position as the richest trading power is owing to Britain's political greatness as the first power holding an empire extending over the whole world. Wolsey knew that England would be profited in various indirect ways by its influence in European politics. And he was right. The real greatness of the country may be said to date from the time when it began to exercise its influence in Europe under Wolsey's direction. From this time forward it has never ceased to do this and has always risen in importance, wealth and esteem. It would be too much to credit Wolsey with the idea of the empire that came to grow up later. But it is not too much to say that the germs of that empire lay in his policy. If England had stood aloof from European politics in the momentous struggle of the sixteenth century, she might have prospered in her

own little insular way, but she must have lost for ever the opportunity of becoming one day the great empire that she is to-day.

In ecclesiastical matters, too, Wolsey pursued an enlightened and unselfish policy. He was eager for reforming the abuses that had crept in the course of ages into the monastic system. He showed this practically by suppressing many of the minor monasteries and founding, by means of the funds thus obtained, a college at Oxford now called Christ Church. He was anxious also to raise the mental and moral status of the clergy and to make them an example to the laity of learning and piety. If he had been allowed to carry out his plans of reform, it is possible that the old Church might have been quietly and thoroughly purged of abuses and the country spared the violent and radical changes brought about by the Reformation.

The Character of Henry VIII.

THE reign of Henry the Eighth is perhaps the most important in English History on account of the momentous changes in religion which were inaugurated during it and which have coloured the entire course of subsequent events in England. And on the reign is strongly impressed the character of the ruler. He held for a long time almost irresponsible power, controlling parliaments and ministers alike and imposing his will upon the people. His character has been variously drawn by historians, some, like the Catholic writers, regarding him as a monster of lust and blood, whilst Mr. Froude, on the other hand, sets him up as the very model of a good man and king. The estimate of Bishop Stubbs seems to be midway between these opposite extremes and comes very near the truth. "I believe him," says this judicious historian, "to have been a man of unbounded selfishness—a man to whom the acquisition of power was precious mainly as a step towards the acquisition of greater power; a man of whom we may say that he was the king, the whole king, and nothing but the king; that he wished

to be, with regard to the Church of England, the pope, the whole pope, and something more than the pope. He is the king for whom the kingdom is, the tyrant whose every caprice is wise and sacred; he turns the theory of kingship into action; the king can do no wrong; therefore men shall call right all that he does; he is the king, not an individual; what in an individual would be theft is no theft in him; all property is the king's, he can take it, and he takes it! all that proceeds from his mouth is law; the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; therefore all that comes out of the king's heart is the Lord's doing." What the writer well calls his grotesque and inhuman self-absorption was the root of all his faults. What Louis XIV said of himself—"*L'etat? C'est moi.* The State, I am the State"—may be applied even more truly to Henry VIII, though it may appear strange to us that a constitutional country like England should have tolerated such an Oriental despot. Macaulay, in one of his essays, thinks that Henry was able to rule absolutely because the people liked him and were convinced that the existing circumstances were such as demanded a dictatorship. But there is not much to show that Henry carried with him the good-will of his people and that the nation participated in his measures. "He was the master and in no sense the minister, of his people; where he carried their good-will with him, it was by forcing, not by anticipating or even educating it. I am obliged altogether to reject the notion that he was the interpreter in any sense of the wishes of his people." We may close the perplexing subject of estimating this remarkable character with the words of the great historian whom we have followed as the safest guide: "I seem to see in him a grand gross figure very far removed from ordinary sympathies, self-engrossed, self-confident, self-willed; unscrupulous in act, violent and crafty, but justifying to himself by his belief in himself, both unscrupulousness, violence and craft, a man who regarded himself as the highest justice, and who looked on mercy as a mere human weakness. And with all this, as needs must have been, a very unhappy man, wretched in his family, wretched in his friends,

wretched in his servants, most wretched in his loneliness ; that awful loneliness in which a king lives, and which the worst as well as the best of despots realises ;" And he well calls such a character "a strong, high-spirited, ruthless, disappointed, solitary creature ; a thing to hate, or to pity, or to smile at, or to shudder at, or to wonder at, but not to judge."

Foreign Relations of England under the Tudors.

As we have seen, the accession of the House of Tudor marks an important epoch in the foreign as well as domestic history of England. It was under the Tudors that England first took her proper place among the European Powers. Hitherto her part in European politics had been confined to wars with France and squabbles with the Papacy. Henry VII by prudent marriages and alliances connected himself with several countries. The later Tudors took a very prominent part in European affairs and made their weight felt with full force. The Tudor period coincided with the sixteenth century, and fell in critical times fraught with the most momentous consequences to the whole world. It was the period of the rise of Spain, and of the great religious upheaval known as the Reformation. Old traditional prejudices and animosities gave way to the new considerations of religion and balance of power. The new power of Spain rapidly rose to great importance in the early part of this period, and soon became one of the arbiters of Europe when its head became also the Emperor of Germany. Moreover, Spain then possessed the United Provinces, or the greater part of modern Holland and Belgium, and owned the enormous riches of the newly-discovered world of America. She became the rival of France and contested with that great Power the supremacy over the Continent in war. England was courted by both of them as an ally capable of turning the balance in favour of either. During the first twenty years of the reign of Henry VIII England alternately

supported both Powers. But when, after the battle of Pavia, Spain became the most powerful of Continental nations, and a few years later, when Henry divorced Catharine, the niece of the Spanish monarch, England definitely made a French alliance. When the great religious struggle of the Reformation began to affect politics, France and Spain, the two great Catholic Powers, partly dropped their animosities and came closer together. The nations that adopted the reformed faith were driven by persecution to make common cause and form a close alliance. In the latter half of the sixteenth century England thus kept aloof from both Spain and France and allied herself with the Protestant countries. Scotland, which was, in the beginning of this period, troubling England and allied with France, now naturally, on account of her adopting the reformed religion, sided with England. The long period of the Scotch alliance with France came to an end at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, and Scotland henceforward became the ally of her southern neighbour.

The Character of Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH completed the work of the Reformation in England, and succeeded in establishing spiritual independence. But this great result of her reign, as is admitted by her great panegyrist, was the fruit of a policy which was not her own and which she starved and mutilated when energy and completeness were most needed. This policy was that of her ministers, especially Burghley and Walsingham. Her credit is that of adopting it, and whenever she modified a course recommended to her by her minister, she never did this without injury to the realm and to herself. We cannot attribute great political wisdom and foresight to her; and even of political tact she had not much. That she succeeded in her object was owing to the incapacity and the divisions of her enemies, rather than to her own wisdom and resolution. Her merit lay in pushing no question to extremities, in launching

forth boldly on no resolute course of action, but rather in waiting and watching and gaining time. Time was indeed her greatest friend, and this is best shown by the length of her life and reign. For, if Mary of Scots had survived her, her legacy to the country would have been a desperate and dreadful civil war. Her greatest praise is that she ever had the interests of the people at heart, and really worked for their good. Her personal character is not very estimable. "Her vanity," says the great historian of her reign, the late Professor Froude, "was as insatiable as it was commonplace. No flattery was too tawdry to find a welcome with her, and as she had no repugnance to false words in others, she was equally liberal of them herself. Her entire nature was saturated with artifice. Except when speaking some round untruth, Elizabeth never could be simple. Her letters and her speeches were as fantastic as her dress, and her meaning as involved as her policy. She was unnatural even in her prayers, and she carried her affectations into the presence of the Almighty. Obligations of honour were not only occasionally forgotten by her, but she did not seem to understand what honour meant." Green speaks of her tortuous ways and her shameless mendacity. "It was an age of political lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom." Her moral character, too, is not above doubt and reproach; and though most of the contemporary scandals about her private life may be dismissed as spiteful, yet enough remains to make us doubt her honour. But, with all her faults, she was very popular, and she also clung to her popularity very tenaciously. She was in many respects a great ruler, and must shine with the reflected lustre derived from the great things done in her reign.

The Reformation.

THE great religious and political upheaval of the sixteenth century, which is known as the Reformation, forms the most critical period in human history since the establishment of Christianity in Europe. It has changed

the whole face of that continent and thoroughly coloured its entire subsequent history. Modern Europe is so completely different from medieval Europe chiefly because the Reformation intervened. It rudely disturbed the repose of nations, set one country against another, and in the same country which formerly enjoyed religious unity it created parties bitterly hostile to each other. Though originating in religious disputes, it has gone far beyond the province of religion and affected nearly every department of life. The struggle to which it gave rise is not yet, after the lapse of nearly four centuries, over; the bitter animosities created have not been allayed, the wounds have not yet been healed. The two great parties that have been set by it in mutual hostility are still irreconcilably opposed in every country, divided in religion, in politics, in economics, even in science. Its consequences have thus been far-reaching and manifold. The Reformation has, like most great events, its panegyrists and denouncers. There are those who extol it as the most beneficent change that has befallen the world which could not well have got on without it. They attribute all the good of modern civilization and its continued progress to it, and assert that, if it had not happened, Europe would have retrograded and been like Asia in most matters; whilst its opponents denounce it *in toto*, and trace nearly every political and social evil of subsequent days to this pernicious origin. According to these it has been the cause of untold miseries to the people, has destroyed their faith and peace and contentment, and introduced the modern spirit of unrest and infidelity, which is sapping the very foundations of society.

Amid such conflicting views, supported by men of eminence in learning and research and thought on either side, and to be found in historical works of great pretensions, it is hard to form an impartial and calm judgment. The Indian student, however, can judge fairly of this great event as the circumstances and influences which tend to warp the judgment of a European student are absent in his case. He has undue sympathy neither with the Catholic nor the Protestant, and is, at

times, when perplexed by hopelessly conflicting opinion, disposed to cry out "a plague on both your houses." If the historical facts are laid before him, he can reason without bias and arrive at a fair conclusion. But it is just these historical facts that have been tampered with by partisan writers, who have suppressed those that oppose their views and garbled others. Catholic writers, for instance, always complain that what is called the history of England since the Reformation is a tissue of misrepresentation and deliberate falsehood, tried to be palmed off as genuine history by unscrupulous historians bent on defending the great English Protestant actors in the struggle. To judge from some recent authentic publications, this charge seems to have been tolerably well founded. The state papers and other public documents recently calendared and published by the English Government tend to show that the currently accepted view of historians like Hume, Froude and others is excessively one-sided, and needs to be corrected. The recent works of Brewer, Gardiner, Stubbs and others shew the Reformation and the Reformers in their true colours. A most notable instance of exposure of falsehood and deliberate misrepresentation is to be found in Dr. Gasquet's recent important work on the Dissolution of Monasteries. He shews by means of the original documents, still extant and now published for the first time, how grossly unfair historians have been in calling these monasteries corrupt and the haunts of vice and indolence, and many other hard names. Dr. Gasquet has succeeded, to the satisfaction of even Protestant critics, in proving conclusively the healthy condition of all, save a very few religious houses, and the base motives of greed and spoliation which urged the king and his tools to confiscate their property and dissolve them. In Germany too the Protestant historians have been charged with deliberate falsification of history which has for a long time been almost exclusively in their hands. But recently a great German Catholic historian, Dr. Janssen, has shewn in a monumental work the true nature of the Protestant revolution in his country, the mixed motives in which it originated, and the disasters which it caused to the land and the people.

The Reformation in England.

THE Reformation may be said to have originated in England with Wicklif. Though he had not much influence in his own land and his followers were put down with severity, his writings had a considerable share in stirring up discontent with the existing order of things in religion on the Continent. Luther, Huss, and other Reformers were inspired by them to oppose the Catholic Church and to break its great power in the State. Strictly speaking, however, this great religious revolution first rose in Germany under Luther who began in right earnest the war against the Church. He succeeded in gaining the support of some German princes, and after many difficulties he established Protestantism on a sufficiently strong basis in Germany, though the Emperor was bitterly opposed to it. England was also at first opposed to the new spirit, and its king, Henry VIII, wrote a masterly treatise refuting Luther's doctrines, which was much admired, and for which he got from the Pope the celebrated title of 'Defender of the Faith.' The people too were attached to the old faith which was endeared to them by many associations and which was of great use and service to them in many ways. But unfortunately the question of the divorce from Catharine cropped up to change the attitude of the king and his surroundings. As Henry could not get the divorce from the Pope, he determined to do without him and to be his own Pope. To obtain his selfish purpose and to oppose the Pope, he sided with the Reformers and tried to use them as his tools. At first his sole object was only to abolish the authority of the Pope in England, and not to adopt the Reformation with its new doctrines. He was against any doctrinal change whatever and wanted to keep everything of Catholicism except the Pope. Then the Church of England according to his desire would have been not Protestant but Schismatic, that is, cut off from Rome and the Pope. Thus the Reformation began in England from a purely personal and even a sensual motive. Henry, as Dr. Gardiner puts it, threw off the authority of the Pope, simply because he was tired of a staid and elderly wife,

and had fallen in love with a flighty young woman. But Henry found towards the close of his reign that he could not stand thus alone, having against him both the Pope and the Protestant Princes and States. In the next reign efforts were made to bring about doctrinal changes and to approach Protestantism. It was, however, in the reign of Elizabeth that the Church of England acquired its distinctly Protestant character and the Reformation was completely established in the country. The old faith and the old Church were utterly ruined and discredited in the country, and thenceforward they ceased to have direct power or to be a menace to the people.

As regards the result of the Reformation in England, there is a great conflict of opinions. As mentioned in the last essay, there are many who condemn it wholly and trace all the evils of the succeeding ages to it. Among these are to be found even Protestant writers, and we may quote one of the latest of these, whose views may have special interest to us, as he is Professor of History in Deccan College, Poona. "The depths of degradation," says Mr. Bain, Fellow of All Souls, Oxford, "to which the Church, and the spiritual condition of England, sank in the reign of Elizabeth, is literally indescribable. Truly may we say that whatever might have been the sins of the old Church, the period in which religion really required reformation was, *when it had been reformed.* In fact, though it sounds perhaps a little too epigrammatic, it is exactly and literally true that by changing one letter we obtain the truth: Reformation was *Deformation,* in every sense of that word: disorganisation; destruction, chaos, deformity; moral, æsthetic, political and intellectual dissolution, degradation and decay." And again "upon Henry VIII and his daughter rests a terrible responsibility—that of having originated and established a hideous iniquity which brought death, dishonour, and misery upon thousands during two generations; and of which long after custom had obliterated the marks of violence and injustice, and naturalised the new system in the soil, the consequences were to run into succeeding centuries, and lead to bitter civil and religious enmity which should periodically deprive

masses of Englishmen of their fortunes and their lives." These are strong words and evidently exaggerated. Yet they serve to show the tendency of modern research and thought about the Reformation in England. It has been too long falsely cried up as an immense benefit by prejudiced and partisan writers. The time seems to be coming when it is to be denounced as an unmixed evil.

Elizabethan Literature.

FAMOUS as is the age of Elizabeth for many glorious deeds done in it, like the defeat of the Spanish Armada, it is rendered immortal in history by its great literary works. The age was one of great activity and enthusiasm which manifested themselves in all departments of life. The great political and religious struggle of the Reformation in which the nation was then deeply engaged, stirred it to its inmost depths and called forth all its latent powers. The success with which it was crowned, and the vindication of its liberty against the armed force of Spain and the spiritual opposition of Rome, infused a feeling of strength and independence which appears everywhere. The age of the Armada was also the age of voyages and adventure, and the age of great poets and dramatists. The newly-awakened activity of the people could not find sufficient vent at home, and sought new fields in foreign countries. Many went to America and founded there settlements which within two centuries became powerful and famous. Then was also founded the East India Company which was destined to create and govern a vast Eastern Empire. These things were done quietly and attracted little attention at the time, though the seeds were laid of two great empires. But still more quiet and unnoticed was the literature of the age which even looked down upon the men who have really immortalised it. English literature, though it had begun with Chaucer, had fallen during the century and a half that came after him into a very low state. Of poetry there was little, and that too was mere doggrel. In prose there were only the

works of Malory and Sir Thomas More which really begin the history of English prose. But now there was a sudden exuberance of literary activity in nearly all departments. Poetry, epic and lyric, the drama, history, philosophy, romance, all were cultivated, and works composed in them which will live as long as the language. It is not only that several very great works were produced. In nearly everything that was then written there is the diffusion of a living force, and the presence of great beauty in prose and verse. There was something in the air, as it were, at the time, which raised even a dull writer above his ordinary level, and inspired almost every one. Excellence of a high order is to be found somewhere or other in nearly every writer of that time.

All these combined to produce the famous Elizabethan literature, about which a very competent critic, Mr. Saintsbury, emphatically says that compared to it "the whole literary achievement of Latin antiquity is but a neat school exercise," and that "in every point, but accomplished precision of form, it may challenge comparison with Greek itself." In this literature the spirit of the time found its highest and noblest expression. The spirit of the Reformation and of Protestantism, brought from Germany, was then in the air. With it there was also the spirit of the Renaissance imported from Italy. The revival of classical learning which followed the fall of Constantinople, gave a strong impetus to the literature and art of Italy. The new culture of Italy was greatly affected by the Elizabethans, and distinct traces of Italian influence can be found in their literature. Cultured Italy did not relish the rough and ready movement of the Reformation which began in Germany. Germany, on the other hand, was too seriously occupied and inclined to care for the culture of the Italian Renaissance. So the two movements ran their course apart in Europe, and later even became hostile to each other. But England welcomed both and readily assimilated the spirit of the Reformation and of the Renaissance alike and simultaneously. And the result is embodied in the

Elizabethan literature, especially in the drama. This drama is the greatest achievement of that literature, though, as we have said, in other departments too much excellent work was produced. In poetry, the famous epic of Spenser, *the Faerie Queene*, leads the way, glorifying the age and the queen that ruled over it. By the side of Spenser there are a whole host of poets of more than average, and some of very high, merit, for, as has been well said, England was then a nest of singing birds. But they are all overshadowed by the greater lights of Spenser and Sidney. In prose, there is Bacon, whose works, literary and philosophical, mark an epoch in the history of literature and of philosophy. The spirit of the Reformation protesting against the existing state of things, as it affected literature, may be seen in his works. For he was the first to raise a vehement protest against the barren philosophy then in vogue, and to break through the barriers raised by blind deference to authority. His great work, the *Instauratio Magna*, roused learned men throughout Europe, and may be said to have founded modern science, which has proceeded on the lines of fruitful discoveries and inventions, tending to enlarge human happiness and mitigate human suffering, which Bacon laid down.

In the drama Shakspere, of course, stands at the head. The immortal creations of that universal genius, of that oceanic mind, as Coleridge has well called it—for it is with the ocean alone that it can be compared, such is its immensity, strength, grandeur, and freshness,—are known everywhere and have become the common property of the world. But great, superbly great, as is Shakspere's drama, to see the real greatness of the Elizabethan drama, we must look also to the contemporary dramatists with their richness, variety, and originality. These are peculiarly unfortunate in having been Shakspere's contemporaries, for their merits are obscured by his resplendent genius, just as the planets and stars are blotted out of the sky during the day by the light of the sun. At any other period these so-called minor

dramatists would have stood in the very first rank. One of them, Marlowe, is considered to be the equal of Shakspere, and if he had lived longer and developed his powers, he too would have given us immortal plays. Even as it is, some of his plays are better than the earlier ones of Shakspere who imitated him at first. Ben Jonson with his classic learning and tastes also produced remarkable work. Then there are Beaumont and Fletcher, who, it is now proved, really wrote some of the plays that usually went under Shakspere's name, so abundant is their genius, Marston and Dekker, Chapman and Heywood, all of them playwrights of genius and importance. Within the short period of half a century so much of literary excellence is crowded together that it may be said that no other town or country can approach it in this. "For originality," says the critic quoted above, "volume, generic resemblance of character, and individual independence of trait, exuberance of inventive thought, and splendour of execution in detached passages, the Elizabethan drama stands alone in the history of the world."

The Early Stuarts and their Theory of Kingship.

THE Stuart period is marked by changes of the greatest importance to the constitution of the country. The constitution, as we find it now, was mainly settled then after great conflicts between the sovereign and the people. The Tudor monarchs were despots by instinct, and circumstances greatly favoured them. They were all persons of great strength of character and possessed tact and discretion. They helped the nation to pass through the great religious crisis of the Reformation, and managed its affairs so as to make it respected throughout Europe. Spiritual emancipation at home, and honours and glory abroad, were the great work of the Tudors for England; and the nation forgave many of their grave faults for this. During the troublous period of the last Tudor, it had also not much

leisure and strength to resent the arbitrariness of the Crown. The great religious schism had produced weakness and indecision ; whilst the menace of foreign invasion, which hung for a long time over the country, really helped to unite people and sovereign together as nothing else could have. Thus the splendour of the policy of Henry VIII, which made England the arbiter of Europe, and enabled her to defy with impunity the power of Rome, and its brilliant continuation by his great daughter, the conqueror of the proud Armada and the Sepir of the power of Spain, as well as the internal weakness of the people, who were passing through a terrible crisis, made the absolutism of the Tudor monarchs successful and even, it may be said, to a certain extent popular.

But circumstances had changed considerably under the early Stuarts. The crisis of the change of religion was over. The people began to feel their strength. No danger of foreign interference united them to the Crown. The prestige of England on the Continent was fast dwindling owing to the craven policy of the first Stuart. Moreover the king was also personally quite the reverse of the great Tudor monarchs of whom Englishmen were so proud. His faults as well as virtues may be best characterized by the word unkingly. Instead of the manly qualities which the people were accustomed for centuries to look for in their kings and even queens, James prided himself on his learning which he paraded like a pedant, and on his theology which betrayed him into many a false position. It was his peculiar theology and learning that made him put forward in a very offensive form his claims to rule as derived directly from God. He and his flatterers elaborated that servile doctrine which became famous as the divine right of kings. This doctrine has been well summarised by Macaulay. It maintained that God regarded hereditary monarchy as opposed to other forms of government with peculiar favour; that the rule of succession of the eldest son to the throne was a divine institution ; that no human power, not even that of the whole legislature, no length of adverse possession, though it extended to ten centuries, could deprive a legitimate

prince of his rights; that the authority of such a prince was necessarily always despotic; that the laws, by which in England and in other countries the prerogative of the Crown was limited, were to be regarded merely as concessions which the sovereign had freely made and might at his pleasure resume; and that any treaty which a king might conclude with his people was merely a declaration of his present intentions and not a contract of which the performance could be demanded. This was a preposterous claim to put forward before the English nation at any time by any king, however popular. But the time when James urged it was peculiarly unfortunate. He was personally most unpopular. His foreign policy was weak and brought the country into disrepute. His domestic policy was vacillating and unskilful; while the people were beginning to feel their own strength and in no mood to acquiesce in the will of a weak and pedantic ruler whom they despised. Even under the last years of Elizabeth they had grown troublesome, and were managed with difficulty by her wise statesmen. On many points she had to yield to her Commons and forego her wishes. James did not know the tough nature of the people he had to deal with, and persisted in his unwise attempts to rule absolutely. Weak himself, he had still weaker advisers round him who brought him to the verge of ruin. The unwise attempts to force religious uniformity upon the people, who were growing terribly earnest over their religious beliefs, made matters worse. Discontent was growing fast. James tried to govern without Parliament. But he could not do this long. He had to call a Parliament in 1621, which met in no pacific mood and accomplished much in way of reform.

After James' death his policy was continued by his son, who added to the faults of the father a strength of will and obstinacy which proved disastrous to him. He was also possessed by the idea, which he sincerely believed, that he had received the power to rule absolutely from God. It may be said that the Stuarts fell martyrs to this one idea. Never had doctrine so much affected practice and conduct as in their case. Their blind obstinacy to put this doctrine

of divine right into practice, regardless of circumstances and obstacles, proved their ruin. James escaped with his life, but his latter days were embittered by the opposition and discontent he caused. Charles I lost his head in the attempt after plunging the country into a bloody Civil War. The determination with which the nation underwent all hardships and even the trials of a military government showed that they could not put up with the Stuart doctrine of divine absolutism. But the last Stuart made a final effort to continue his father and grandfather's policy, notwithstanding the stern lesson taught by the Civil War and the Protectorate. He was not long allowed to rule in his own Stuart way, and within three years was driven from the throne and the country to pass the last years of his life as an exile at the court of England's hereditary enemy, continuously plotting against the throne which he had shown himself unfit to possess. After him the Stuarts were never given a chance to rule, and the last unfortunate descendants of the ill-starred line died as exiles and pretenders.

Oliver Cromwell.

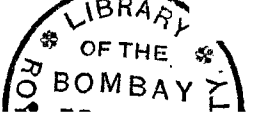
THE character of Cromwell has been much misrepresented by party writers, especially Royalists, who painted it in very black colours as that of a monster of wickedness. Absurd and malicious stories about his having sold himself to the devil and other imaginary misdeeds were current for a long time in books as well as among the people. The man who was guilty of having dethroned and beheaded a king was long recklessly maligned by writers who naturally thought that their invective would be pleasing to kings as well as the people of England, who have a strong instinct of loyalty. It is only of late that the clouds that had gathered in the course of two centuries round his memory have been gradually dispersed by the efforts of able and dispassionate historians. Foreigners have been juster to him than his own countrymen, though even these now begin

to see his greatness in its true light. The great French historian and statesman, M. Guizot, sees in him "perhaps the only example which history affords of one man having governed the most opposite events and proved sufficient for the most various destinies." A German philosopher calls "Cromwell, with his lofty character, the most enlightened statesman who ever adorned the Protestant world."

He was one of those extraordinary characters that arise in a country in critical times to save it. His rise is certainly marvellous. "To him was granted," says the great German historian of this period, Ranke, "the marvellous distinction of breaking through the charmed circle which, among the European nations, hems in the private man. Invested with sovereign authority, he forced his way into the history of the world. The king, who reckoned a hundred ancestors in Scotland and held the throne of England by that hereditary right on which most other states rested, was overthrown mainly by the armed force which he created, and was then succeeded by him." This long and fierce struggle with the king had torn up the country, which came to be on the verge of social dissolution. This internecine contest had bred anarchy, and society was in a lawless condition. Order was the first and indispensable thing that was required at that time. Cromwell was the only man who could bring back order in the country and keep it. He did both. As he often said of himself, he was the constable set to keep the peace in the parish. He set about this task resolutely and sternly. For this purpose he was even tyrannical and violent. His system of government was the odious military system. It had neither law nor constitution on its side. But its great plea was that of necessity. Cromwell was not by nature a despot. He was generous, just, moderate, merciful and sincere. But his peculiar circumstances forced him into doing many things which were against his nature. His was not quite a connected systematic policy. He did what he thought best suited the needs of the hour with the materials that he found at hand, and has been called the typical opportunist. Hence his many contradictory deeds.

He wanted to surround his absolute authority based on military force with legal limits and parliamentary control. He wanted to have parliament. Yet he could not get on with it smoothly and abruptly dissolved it, ruling for some time without any.

But, apart from all this, Cromwell's rule was a great success. "Order, trade, commerce, justice, learning, culture, rest, and public confidence returned and grew even stronger. Prosperity, wealth, harmony were restored to the nation; and with these a self-respect, a spirit of hope and expansion, such as it had not felt since the defeat of the Armada. Never in the history of England has reorganisation of its administrative machinery been known at once so thorough and so sound. No government, not even that of Henry VII, nor of Elizabeth, had ever been more frugal; though none, with its resources, had effected so much. No government had ever been so tolerant in things of the mind; none, so just in its dealings with classes and interests; none, so eager to suppress abuses, official tyranny, waste, and peculation. No government had been so distinctly modern in its spirit; so penetrated with desire for reform, honesty, capacity." These were the splendid results of the Protector's rule at home according to his latest biographer, Mr. Frederic Harrison. Abroad his policy was even more splendidly successful. At his death England "held a rank in the eyes of Europe such as she had never reached since the days of the Plantagenets, such as she has never reached since, but in the time of Marlborough, Nelson, and Wellington." Foreign sovereigns stood in awe of him, as none before them or after have ever stood in awe of an English ruler. His mediation in Continental affairs was never in vain. And this mediation, let it be remembered to his honour, was for tolerance, justice and peace, as in the most brilliant instance of his championing the cause of the Vaudois.



The Revolution of 1688.

By a revolution is generally meant now a violent change in the government and institutions of a country. The French Revolution of the last century has emphasised this view by its terrible and bloody career. But the English Revolution of the seventeenth century was of a totally different character. It was, as Burke happily says, not a revolution made, but a revolution prevented. If the series of events, which began with the invitation to William and culminated in the resolution of Parliament declaring him king, had not happened, it is almost certain that the tyranny of James II. would have been overthrown by a violent and bloody struggle which would have plunged the land again into the civil warfare of forty years ago. The different natures of the English and the French Revolutions are fairly indicative of the different characters of the two peoples. The French groaned patiently for ages under the tyranny of their kings and nobles without any resistance; but when they finally resolved to suffer no longer, they went to the other extreme, set aside law and order, and swept away every old institution in a hurricane of excess and violence. The English, on the other hand, never allowed things to go to extremes, and offered a stubborn resistance to kingly tyranny from the first. In their efforts to vindicate their liberty they never laid aside the law, but as much as possible used the means furnished by the Constitution. As soon as the arbitrary proclivities of the Stuarts were clearly discerned, a steady and determined constitutional opposition was organised, and the subjects guarded their threatened liberties with unremitting vigilance, remaining all the while within the limits of the law. When once unfortunately matters drifted beyond the possibility of amicable settlement, it was the king, and not the people, that first resorted to force and violence. But even when violence was used and a civil war had to be fought, the English showed nothing of the mad fury and savage licence which characterised the closing years of the last century in France. No complete breach was made with the past, but as soon as the aim of vindicating their liberties was achieved, the sword was sheathed and things

ran their usual course again. All the ancient time-honoured institutions of the land remained intact, and the Constitution emerged stronger and better from the struggle.

The Revolution of 1688 was the final and complete settlement of the dispute between the king and the people, which had lasted throughout the entire Stuart period. James I. was wise enough not to urge his fancied right too far against an unwilling people, but his son brought matters to a head and paid the penalty of his obstinacy on the block. But after the short-lived rule of the Commonwealth, another chance was given to the royal family. Charles II. was saved from the follies of his father by his indolence and easy-going nature, which prevented him from coming in serious conflict with the people. He was too luxurious and extravagant to care for anything but money, and so long as he got this, he did not interfere with the liberties of his subjects. His brother, unfortunately, was of quite a different nature, being like his father Charles I, whose blunders he repeated and the lessons of whose disastrous reign were lost upon him. He magnified his prerogative to an intolerable extent and showed that he was determined to rule very despotically indeed. His misfortune was to be a sincere and even bigoted Catholic, and he almost wilfully increased this misfortune, already very great, by indiscreetly trying to favour his obnoxious religion and even to foist it upon the unwilling people. Catholicism was then very aggressive on the Continent, and especially in France under Louis XIV. James prepared to bring England again under the sway of its former religion. The Church of England had been the greatest support of the throne, even under the Stuart tyranny. But James very unwisely set it against him by persecuting its clergy and bishops and menacing its rights. Within three years he succeeded in thoroughly alienating nearly every section of the community and in rousing almost universal opposition. Still the people were unwilling to proceed to extremes with him as they hoped that his reign would be soon over and he would be succeeded by his daughter, who was a Protestant and married to a wise prince. But when a son was born to James, the people had to give up all hope of peaceful change in the near future, and to resort to

active measures for freeing themselves from the existing as well as impending tyranny. They called William, the son-in-law of James, who played into their hands by leaving the country.

The mild nature of the Revolution is clearly seen from the difficulty which the Commons felt as regards the question of the crown, and the great pains which they were at to prove that James had abdicated, and that therefore the crown had devolved upon Mary and William. Though in fact James was driven from the throne which was offered to a foreign prince who came to the rescue of the English people, their representatives tried hard to show that there was no breach of the law of succession, and that nothing unusual had been done. They vindicated their liberties and secured their rights against the arbitrary will of the sovereign, yet they showed the utmost regard for law. The changes effected by the Revolution were fundamental and have given the bent to the Constitution which it has ever since retained. The people settled their dispute with the king in a manner entirely favourable to themselves. Though they retained the crown as the head of the State, yet its power was so definitely hedged in that in all serious questions of difference the king had to give way to Parliament, especially the House of Commons. That House henceforward became supreme in the realm. There were to be no struggles any more between it and the king as before; or if any struggle were to arise, it would speedily end in its success. Occasion was taken at this juncture to secure definitely the liberty of the press and of religion. Among the great legislative changes effected by the Revolution may be noted the immobility of the judges, the reform of the trials for treason, the more efficient control of the income of the sovereign, the excision from the oath of allegiance of the clause which, in direct contradiction to the Great Charter, asserted that under no pretence whatever might subjects take up arms against their king, the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and the partial toleration of Dissenters in England.

Louis XIV.

The reign of Louis XIV. is one of the longest in modern history, extending, as it did, to sixty-five years, and of the greatest importance in Western Europe, as for a long time the French monarch was the arbiter of its destinies. England had necessarily much close connection with France during this entire period. This reign, which began in 1651, coincided in England with the rule of the Protectorate, the reigns of Charles II., of James II., of William III. and Mary, and of Anne. Louis just survived to witness the accession of George I. and the House of Hanover to the English throne in 1715. He affected in a marked manner the domestic as well as foreign policy of all these kings. As friend or foe, secret or open, Louis was ever present before their minds and had to be reckoned with. On the other hand, Louis had always his eye on England, as its friendship or acquiescence would help and its opposition thwart his policy. That policy was to aggrandise France at the expense of all other European states, to render the French monarchy thoroughly absolute at home and abroad by striking down all opposition, by breaking the power of the nobility and clergy, and weakening by war and dissension hostile states. He pursued this policy with great prudence and perseverance, with splendid success for a long time, but with ultimate disaster and ruin to himself, his country, and his successors. In the means he employed for his end he was utterly unscrupulous, caring neither for right nor religion. His idea of sovereignty was that of an Oriental despot rather than that of the head of a constitutional monarchy, as France undoubtedly was in the Middle Ages and even till Louis' days. His domestic policy is well embodied in his famous phrase, "The State? I am the State!" So his foreign policy may be embodied in a very similar phrase, "Europe? France is Europe!" His foreign policy thus, it is clear, was dangerously aggressive and threatened the freedom and even existence of the neighbouring states, just as his home policy had proved ruinous to the liberties and political and social well-being of his subjects. In both foreign and domestic policy, "he stands out," says a

well-informed writer of our day, Mr. W. S. Lilly, " as the supreme example of monarchical egotism, the arch-exponent of the theory that Government is nothing but a mere material weight—a lever of physical power. Might is his sole test of right or wrong. Neither moral nor religious considerations, neither sense of honour nor fear of shame, avail to restrain him from the prosecution of any enterprise which promises him to be advantageous." The Pope stood forth against his intense absolutism ; so Louis did not scruple, though nominally a Catholic and having the title of the Eldest Son of the Church, to insult him openly, to act in concert with the enemies of the Church, to lose no opportunity of thwarting his power and authority everywhere. He allied himself with the Ottoman Turks, the oppressors of Christianity, who were then fighting with the great Catholic power of Austria. At home he struck the axe at the root of the power of the Pope by cutting off the Church in France from Rome and rendering it completely subservient to himself by the declaration of what were mockingly called the Gallican " liberties." Still Louis passes with some for a good Catholic ruler, chiefly because he persecuted the French Protestants. But this notion is entirely false. This cruel persecution was not dictated by religious zeal at all. It was dictated by policy, by motives of political unity which would follow conformity with the predominant religion. The consequences were disastrous to France, as it lost many of its most industrious and skilful men who carried their skill and industry to enrich hostile countries. But it was owing to an error of cool deliberate judgment, and not to one of blind zeal and bigotry.

Louis knew the importance of England and its weight in European politics on whichever side it might be cast. He was very anxious to have it on his side, and, owing to the weakness of Charles II., he succeeded during the first half of his reign. French gold and beauty were but too successfully employed to neutralise England's natural weight in the great game which Louis was playing on the Continent. Now and then England awoke from its lethargy as when the Triple Alliance was made to thwart France. But Louis easily won over

the pleasure-seeking Charles and pursued his aims undisturbed. James, too, was his vassal, and when dethroned played into his hands by dividing England and weakening its power by conspiracies and threats of rebellion. When thus the only power that could successfully checkmate him was unworthily acquiescent in his designs, Louis found little difficulty in becoming very formidable in Europe. He carried on a series of successful wars by means of his splendid armies and brilliant marshals, and humiliated the Dutch, the Germans, the Spanish, the Austrians, till his power reached its height in 1688, when he overran most wantonly the Palatinate. But just then an event happened which turned the tide slowly but completely against him.

The Revolution of 1688 put a stop to the scandalous inaction and servility of England by driving away the French pensioner from the English throne, and by setting up in his place the man who had realised the dangerous tendency of the French monarch's policy, and was determined to use his new and vast resources as English monarch against it. William III. restored England to its natural position as the leading state in Western Europe, and arrayed its power against French aggression till Louis was worsted, and his reign, which had opened and continued for a long while so brilliantly, closed in disaster and gloom. It was the accession of England to the enemies of France that turned the scale during the latter part of Louis' reign. William was thus not only the saviour of the liberties of England, but also the saviour of the independence of Europe when it had been threatened and well nigh extinguished by the aggressive policy of Louis. Though he died just as the last and most successful war against France was commencing, it was his policy that was continued by Marlborough and the Whigs under Anne, and that gave the death-blow to French aggression. Louis was saved from a humiliation more bitter than he had actually to submit to by the treaty of Utrecht, only by the fall of the Whigs, and the reversal of the policy of William by the Tories, whose conduct in this affair seems to be doubtful if not quite unpatriotic. Louis died soon after, having been preceded to the

grave by his son and grandson, in solitude and grief, deserted by his nearest and dearest, and with the consciousness of being unmourned by his people. We may close with the remarks of the great German historical writer, the late Dr. Döllinger: "History has pronounced its verdict upon Louis XIV. It has denied him the title of 'Great' and thus has not ranked him with Alexander or Charles the Great, or Frederick II. of Prussia. Real genius and the eagle eye of the born commanders, such as Napoleon I. possessed, were denied to him. The educated portion of his people rightly speak of him as *le grand monarque*, but they only, for in the remembrance of the masses his name no longer holds a place either for praise or blame; according to the testimony of Count Gobineau, scarcely a peasant could be found anywhere in France who cherished his memory. Nevertheless a monarch whose influence upon the course of the world's history was so powerful that an epoch in the progress of civilization has been called the 'age of Louis XIV' deserves to be spoken of as 'the great monarch.'"

The Age of Anne.

The reign of Queen Anne forms, like that of Elizabeth before and of Victoria after, a brilliant period in English history. Though much shorter in duration than either, it is equally distinguished by the glories of peace and war. Persons who obtained renown in many fields of activity have shed a bright halo round the name of the good Queen who has been fortunate enough to have an age called after her name. The Age of Pericles in Ancient Greece, the Age of Augustus in Ancient Rome, the Age of Leo the Tenth in Italy, and of Louis the Fourteenth in France are periods renowned in history for military and literary glory; and the Age of Anne may well rank with these. The brilliant achievements of Marlborough in Germany and the United Provinces were fully equal to those of any general, ancient or modern. They were moreover not barren, but proved of the greatest service to Europe. Marlborough completed the policy and work of William III and succeeded in thoroughly shattering the inordinate ambi-

tion of Louis the Fourteenth. We have seen the dangerous nature of that monarch's policy, which had been successfully pursued for half a century. But to Marlborough and Anne belongs the honour of giving the death-blow to that policy, of laying low the haughtiest monarch of France and of silencing her imperious voice in Europe for a long time. Not for the first, nor even for the last time, England saved Europe from the over-towering ambition of a French tyrant.

But the Age is more renowned still for its literary achievement. As in the time of Elizabeth, the great struggle with her foreign foes roused the activity of her people in many directions, and we accordingly find in both periods, along with great generals and admirals, great poets and dramatists, preachers and essayists, travellers and adventurers. Among the prose writers of this age are Swift, the most vigorous and sarcastic writer perhaps in the whole language, and Addison, the most graceful and chaste. He, with Steele, struck out a new line of literature and began the periodic essay which became in his hands a great vehicle of pleasant instruction as well as a mighty power for good, and which continued to flourish more or less vigorously for a long time after them. The greatest English poet since Milton and Dryden adorns this age in the person of Pope, whose faultless verse showed to what heights of technical perfection metrical composition can attain. Long and fierce has been the controversy over the poetical merits of Pope, his opponents having even gone to the length of denying him the title of poet altogether. But unprejudiced and fair criticism must allow that, however lacking he may be in originality of invention and naturalness of description, he is absolutely unrivalled in felicity of expression and keen invective in verse. By the side of these great figures there are the minor writers both of prose and poetry. There is the versatile Bolingbroke, Pope's friend and patron, statesman and publicist, who wrote very shallow philosophy in excellent prose; there is Atterbury, another of Pope's friends, an eloquent preacher and excellent writer. Then there is Gay, the brilliant poet of the Fables and the Beggar's Opera; Arbuthnot, whose

famous work gave the Englishman the national name of John Bull; Matthew Prior, who wrote some of the best epigrams and lyrics of the time.

The great distinguishing feature of the literary history of the reign of Anne is the cordiality of the relations between the politicians and the men of letters, and the munificent patronage of literature by men in power. While the Elizabethan statesmen looked down upon the men who have really rendered their age immortal, the ministers of Anne delighted to shower honours and emoluments upon the writers of the time. Statesmen of both the parties vied in their munificent patronage of literary men. Somers and Bolingbroke were themselves both men of affairs and letters, and they patronised writers like Addison and Pope. Addison was Secretary of State, Prior held a good diplomatic post, Swift was dean and could have been a bishop but for his own fault. Literature indeed held a very high position in politics and society, from which it was unfortunately to be soon ousted in the next two reigns, when nothing more miserable could be imagined than the condition of professional literary men. In science too the age is distinguished by the great name of Newton, whose valuable researches opened a new era in natural philosophy and astronomy.

Marlborough.

The name of Marlborough towers above all other illustrious names in the reign of Anne. His campaigns on the Continent repeated the exploits of Edward III. and Henry V. and covered the English arms with glory, reviving in men's minds the memory of Crecy and Poictiers and Agincourt. Coming as they did after the long and disgraceful period of subservience to the French monarch under the two last Stuarts, Marlborough's victories were hailed all the more heartily. England regained its natural position of a great Western power, and the long spell of French supremacy was thoroughly broken. Louis XIV. had struck terror into the hearts of all politicians, English and foreign, and

by a career of well-nigh unbroken success for half a century had threatened to become the universal lord of Europe. His well-trained and excellently appointed armies, of which he could put several at the same time in the field in different quarters; his skilful and brave marshals whose brilliant victories rendered them invincible; his immense wealth and vast resources which, though they were impoverishing the country, were yet not unbearable by it, and which were administered under his direction by some of the ablest ministers and financiers Europe had yet seen, had created a prestige which over-awed all. This prestige Marlborough destroyed. He routed the victorious legions of France, conquered the invincible marshals of Louis, exhausted his resources and made him sue humbly for peace. And this he did under great difficulties. He had to contend against the national jealousy of his own allies, the Dutch, and the personal jealousy and ill-will of his own colleagues who tried to hamper him at every step. He did not wield supreme authority, but the command was divided, and the commanders of the Dutch States were burdened with civilian advisers who proved veritable thorns in the sides of the generals. His armies were composed of confederates and mercenaries from different nations and owning different jurisdictions. To these difficulties on the field were added political troubles at home. He had to watch domestic politics at every turn, and to try to keep the Whig party in power by every means. The Tories were against the great war which he was waging, and they tried to discredit him and to belittle his exploits. His wife proved of great help to him by her influence with the Queen, which she used on behalf of the Whigs and the War. But when at last the Tories triumphed and the Duchess quarrelled with Anne, the war which had proved so successful was foolishly or, as there is some suspicion, even traitorously huddled to a close by the new ministers. England made a treaty much less advantageous than the course and issue of the war gave her a right to expect, and Marlborough had the mortification to see his enemy escape lightly, and the fruits of his victories thrown away by English politicians.

Marlborough's military genius was of the highest order and entitles him to rank among the greatest captains who have ever lived. "Hardly any other modern general," says Mr. Lecky, "combined to an equal degree the three great attributes of daring, caution, and sagacity, or conducted military enterprizes of equal magnitude and duration without losing a single battle, or failing in a single siege. He was one of the very few commanders who appear to have shown equal skill in directing a campaign, in winning a battle, and in improving a victory." His uniform good luck on the field is remarkable. Frederick the Great and Napoleon suffered many crushing defeats. Even Wellington met with reverses. But Marlborough never engaged in a battle which he did not win. It was not merely good luck that guided him to success. He had all the qualities of unwearied patience, dogged persistence, great self-command and exquisite tact which make a man successful in every field of life. He was as great a diplomatist as general, though his success in the former capacity is not so widely known. When we read the minute history of his campaigns and his despatches, we know what great diplomacy he had to use with the allies and their generals who were his nominal colleagues, but real obstructors. With Prince Eugene of Savoy he was on cordial terms, and the two agreed thoroughly. But the Dutch States-general, who were the real benefiters by the war which was undertaken and continued by England mainly for them, behaved strangely towards the English captain. Nothing is more conspicuous in his dealings with them than his tact and command of temper under provoking circumstances.

But by the side of his genius and other great qualities Marlborough had great faults which detract much from his character and the admiration otherwise due to it. The greatest of these faults was his extreme unscrupulousness. Scruples of conscience he seems to have had very few, and his guiding principle throughout his career was self-interest. He is guilty of gross treachery and double-dealing for the sake of his own aggrandise-

ment. He rose through the favour of James II., whose patronage he enjoyed, but whom he did not scruple to desert for William. Under the latter he intrigued with the Jacobite court in France. There is even a strong suspicion that he betrayed to the enemies of England the secret of an intended expedition against Brest, and was thereby the cause of the death of hundreds of English lives. Under Anne, too, his benefactress, he corresponded and intrigued with the Jacobites. When George I. ascended the throne, he was appointed commander-in-chief again. But again we find him sending money to the Pretender before the rebellion of 1715. Fidelity to his sovereign was certainly not among his virtues. But in censuring him too severely we must remember the times of trouble and unrest on which his lot was cast in his youthful days. Political morality was very lax among politicians who came to maturity after the Restoration. Trimming from one side to the other and secret intrigues with the opposite party were far too common to be much thought of. William III. knew how little reliable were the men he had to deal with; knew their treason and treachery even when he used them, and took care not to be deceived by them. Marlborough was the creature of the time, and his age must share with him the condemnation that must be pronounced upon him, though we might expect that a great genius like him would rise superior to his age and contemporaries. Excessive avarice and rapacity were the other faults which degrade his character. For all these defects Marlborough has been severely judged by historians, especially Macaulay, who has seized every little point against him and drawn his portrait in very dark colours indeed, calling him a "prodigy of turpitude." With Penn and Dundee, Warren Hastings and Bacon, he shares the misfortune of having excited that brilliant historian's hostility, and of having all his minute faults portrayed and magnified with unsparing rigour to all posterity. Defenders have not been wanting in his case, who, in their turn in trying to palliate his faults, go to the other extreme and whitewash him altogether. Lord Wolseley, his latest biographer has taken this line in his recent volumes and tries to make a

complete hero of his subject. But sober criticism will not agree with the brilliant general who is naturally biassed in favour of his great predecessor. The judgment of the German historian of the English seventeenth century comes very near the mark. "He was," says Ranke, "a true child of the years of the Restoration, of their social training and lax morality, their restless activity in Church and State, in which each individual hoped to turn his natural gifts to account, free from the trammels of any thought of consequences, and to attain everything which in the eyes of men seems desirable. . . Of his fidelity to his sovereign he himself could not have boasted. . . . His cupidity has cast over the brilliancy of his success and fame a shade which makes the contrast all the more painful."

The National Debt.

States, like individuals, incur debt when they cannot meet their liabilities from the revenue. When great wars or other disasters require a large immediate expenditure, which cannot be met from the current income, the public creditor is called in and the required sum is borrowed as a loan. Interest is of course to be paid on this, and this is an almost perpetual burden on the people ever after. Posterity is made to pay for the expenses of its predecessors; and this is considered unjust by many. It has not spent a penny of the original loan, and yet it has to pay millions of interest. But then posterity comes into the inheritance of former ages and enjoys the fruits of their labours for which it directly pays little. So if it inherits the good things, it should also inherit the troubles of its predecessors and pay the interest on the debt they incurred. Moreover, the loans may have been spent in ways which benefit even posterity. The former wars of England which have increased its debt so much were not all fruitless. They preserved and extended the empire in critical times, and thus have helped in creating and increasing the present vast trade of Britain. Though some of those wars may have been unnecessary, yet it is owing to many of them that the empire enjoys peace at present. Long and

successful wars have brought prestige and power with them, and this prestige and power are worth much more than the interest paid on their capital expenditure. Of course a State may incur debt unnecessarily and recklessly just as an individual does. It may, instead of trying skilfully to pay the current expenses out of the current revenue, spend more than its income justifies and borrow year after year the balance to make up the deficit. This is not sound finance. But it does not follow from this that all national debt is bad.

The debt adds in some way also to the stability of the Government, as the people have a large pecuniary stake and will not easily try to bring about a revolution which would wipe away the national debt and deprive them of their interest. For it is a debt which the nation owes to itself, or at least to one part of it; and the interest paid by the State is so much money paid to its own people. The case would be different if it were a foreign debt; for then the interest would go to the foreign creditor, and so much money every year would be drained out of the country. This is the case with more than one half of the public debt of India, which has to send every year four or five millions sterling to England to pay the interest on the debt borrowed from English capitalists. But the national debt of England is entirely English. Its beginning was made in the time of William III. in 1692, when his able Finance Minister, Montague, Lord Halifax, borrowed a million from the public to be repaid afterwards. At first they thought of redeeming the debt, and many efforts were made to do that. But the debt continued to increase steadily throughout the eighteenth century. At the end of the Austrian Succession War in 1748 it was 78 millions; the Seven Years' War swelled it to 138; the American War left it at 249 millions in 1784. But huge as it then looked, it grew nearly fourfold during the gigantic struggle with Napoleon, standing at 840 millions in 1817. Since then, however, it has been gradually reduced through various means by a hundred million and more. The rate of the interest too has been reduced at various periods, till now it is two and three-quarters per cent.

The Cabinet.

The English Constitution is, as we have said, in the main an unwritten Constitution and is full of anomalies. Nothing illustrates this better than the position of the Cabinet. The Cabinet is the most powerful body in the Empire; it is in fact the real ruler of its destinies. It is composed of all the most prominent ministers presiding over all the principal departments of executive government. It includes the minister who receives and disposes of the entire income of the United Kingdom, a sum very nearly equal to a hundred million sterling; the ministers who preside over the army and the navy; the various State Secretaries who really direct the country's relations with all foreign powers, with the Colonies, with India. At its head is the prime minister who is the real ruler of the British Empire, wielding for the time being greater power than any crowned head and enjoying more substantial authority than the sovereign. Yet this body of ministers is unknown to the Constitution and to the law. The Cabinet is technically non-existent in the English Constitution. Its position is quite undefined; there are no rules regulating its procedure. It is an entirely irresponsible body. The ministers are only individually responsible for their various departments. The prime minister as such is not recognised by law and has no legal status. He is only one of the ministers and is known to law and the Constitution as such. It is thus a real anomaly that the most powerful body of men in the realm should have no position in the Constitution. But in practice there is found no inconvenience. The Empire is governed quite as efficiently by such a body as by one which would have a definite status. Nobody is any the worse for this anomaly. It has lasted for generations and nobody ever dreams of removing it. This is the beauty of the English Constitution that, in spite of apparent anomalies and flaws, the whole machinery of government moves regularly and efficiently without much inconvenience or friction. So long as the practical result is satisfactory, the English people do not trouble them-

selves about the theory of their Constitution. They do not go in for perfection of form and outward symmetry.

In former times the sovereign called the Privy Council to advise him on matters of state. But this Council in course of time contained men of different and opposite views as well as grew too large and unwieldy to be consulted with ease and consistency on emergent, or even ordinary, occasions. So a selection was usually made from among the Privy Councillors of men who were known to think alike on public questions. This was the origin of the Cabinet. It is thus a committee of the Privy Council, and its members are recognised only as Privy Councillors. That Council gradually lost power, as its smaller committee gained it, till now it is practically a mere honorary body called on rare state occasions. The Cabinet is also a sort of standing committee of Parliament, for its members all belong to the legislature. Its functions are executive as it administers all the affairs of the Empire; but it springs from the legislature. The efficient secret of the English Constitution has been described by Mr. Bagehot as the close union, the nearly complete fusion of the executive and legislative powers. And this union is effected by the connecting link of the Cabinet. "A Cabinet is a combining committee—a *hyphen* which joins, a buckle which fastens, the legislative part of the State to the executive part of the State. In its origin it belongs to the one; in its functions it belongs to the other." These words of Mr. Bagehot, who has written the best account of the English Constitution as it exists and works at the present day, express the real nature of the Cabinet.

The growth of the Cabinet is entirely modern. A body with this name first appears in the reign of Charles II. who consulted it on all matters of business before submitting them to the larger Privy Council. William III. formed what may be called the first Cabinet on the existing model when he composed it exclusively of Whigs. He as well as his predecessors were in the habit of choosing men from both parties to be their ministers, and hence the Cabinet did not

form a very compact united body. But it acquired this characteristic under the first two Georges who left state affairs almost entirely to their ministers, and unlike their predecessors ceased to attend Cabinet meetings. The Cabinet thus gradually ceased to be a consulting body and was becoming actually the ruling body. This was continued under George III, though he was not indifferent at all to politics like his grandfather and great-grandfather. He continued Cabinet government, which attained its present form in his reign. The Cabinet which Pitt formed in 1783 marks the final stage in the development, and its head, Pitt, was the first to assume the real authority of the Prime Minister.

Robert Walpole.

The great Whig principles of liberty triumphed at the Revolution, and the Whig party came into power as the reward for its long struggle. Under William III. it did not exercise much influence, as that monarch asserted his own authority and preferred to have a divided Cabinet. Anne had strong Tory sympathies and that party returned to power for some time at the end of her reign. But on the accession of George I., who entirely owed his accession to the Revolution principles and the exertions of the great Whig leaders, the Whig party obtained an ascendancy and a hold on power, which it retained for nearly half a century with very little interruption. The first two Georges were entirely under the influence of that party, which did very much to establish their house firmly on the throne of England and brought it safely out of the perilous crises of Jacobite rebellions and the discontent caused by their unpopularity. Of this party and its policy during the first half of the eighteenth century, Walpole was the representative. His qualities were not brilliant and dazzling, his character was not high, he did not possess originality or great administrative capacity, yet he had solid attainments which were eminently useful to the state. "Finding England," says Mr. Lecky, "with

a disputed succession and an unpopular sovereign, with a corrupt and factious Parliament, and an intolerant, ignorant, and warlike people, he succeeded in giving it twenty years of unbroken peace and uniform prosperity, in establishing on an impregnable basis a dynasty which seemed tottering to its fall, in rendering, chiefly by the force of his personal ascendancy, the House of Commons the most powerful body in the State, in moderating permanently the ferocity of political factions and the intolerance of ecclesiastical legislation. A simple country squire, with neither large fortune nor great connections, he won the highest post in politics from rivals of brilliant talent, and he maintained himself in it for a longer period than any of his predecessors." During the twenty years of office he had to contend with great difficulties; especially he had during a great part of it to cope with the most unprincipled and ferocious Opposition that ever persecuted any minister. Yet he successfully carried out his beneficent policy by the aid of Parliament and the strong support of the king and queen. Parliamentary support he owed, according to his accusers, to unscrupulous means, especially bribery; and this charge is repeated by many writers. It would be futile to deny this charge altogether. Walpole did bribe members, but not to such an extent as is alleged. Moreover, we must remember the practice and the low standard of his age which thought lightly of corruption; and Walpole was not worse, if anything rather better, than his contemporaries. An eminent statesman and writer, Mr. John Morley, has recently considered, in a very impartial spirit, most of the charges brought against him, and his opinion is that though he cannot be entirely acquitted and cleared, yet they were grossly exaggerated. He is disposed to agree with another great statesman, Burke, who emphatically said: "Walpole was an honourable man and a sound Whig. He was not, as the Jacobites and discontented Whigs of his own time have represented him, and as ill-informed people still represent him, a prodigal and corrupt minister. They charged him in their libels and seditious conversations as having first reduced corruption to a system. Such was

their cant. But he was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments. The charge of systematic corruption is less applicable to him, perhaps, than to any minister who ever served the crown for so great a length of time. He gained over very few from the Opposition."

Walpole was a great peace minister and steadily avoided interference in Continental politics and wars. He was convinced of the great necessity of long unbroken peace to his country in its then unsettled state, and strove by all available means to obtain and preserve it. Up to his time the traditions of his party were warlike. But he boldly cut these traditions and departed from the old Whig policy of European wars and alliances. The wisdom of this was seen when the country prospered greatly during this long peace and husbanded those resources which enabled it later to engage with such brilliant success in the war of Chatham. His financial policy was also very successful, and he did lasting good to the country by it. He saved it after the terribly ruinous crisis of the South Sea and put its finances on a sound basis. He was one of the first to take efficient measures to reduce gradually the national debt by instituting the Sinking Fund. While the most beneficent, though also the most unsuccessful, part of his policy was the famous excise scheme which would have done great good to trade, but which, owing to his deference to public opinion, he had to abandon. This respect for public opinion marked his policy throughout and seems rather strange when we remember that he was supreme in Parliament and could have afforded to neglect opinion outside its walls. He had the welfare of the country really at heart, and knew that he could advance it better than any other public man of his time. Hence his inordinate desire for power and office. Walpole's rule was not famous for any striking legislation or imposing events. He was himself not a great and commanding speaker, dazzling with his earnest eloquence like Chatham, or like Burke raising the ordinary affairs of the moment to the region of political philosophy. He was eminently business-like, dealing with every question as it arose and on its own merits with

out taking long views or high flights. In debate he was very skilful, and in the exposition of his views, especially of finance, very lucid. By the side of these qualities Walpole had great and glaring defects. But his vices he shared with his age and contemporaries. The general moral tone of the age was very low and he perhaps helped to lower it still more. He was unscrupulous to a great extent about his means and showed a cynical disregard and contempt for human honesty and disinterestedness. He showed an utter want of decorum in public life, whilst in private he was loose and gross. But here, too, his contemporaries, and especially his enemies, were certainly not much better.

The Earl of Chatham.

The reign of George II. has been called by the historian of the eighteenth century, in its early part one of the most prosperous and tranquil, and in its latter part one of the most glorious periods of English history. This early prosperity was owing to the skilful peace administration of Walpole. The latter brilliancy and glory were the result of the policy of Chatham. Walpole, as we have seen, helped the country to pass unhurt through the crisis of the Hanoverian Succession and firmly established the new dynasty on the throne. He husbanded the resources of the country during a long peace and left its finances in a flourishing condition. Chatham's work was of a different kind. He had to conduct a great war with France and he threw his whole heart into it, imparting his own fire to all who served the state on sea or land and raising the nation to a high pitch of enthusiasm. He was lavish about his means and spent freely, having added during a few years sixty millions to the national debt. But he achieved his object of dazzling Europe and of making his country respected and feared in every court on the Continent. At the close of George II's reign, England occupied the proudest position she had held for a long time. Soon after that he fell from power and the war was ill

managed. Once again, as at the end of the Spanish Succession War, England voluntarily gave up the hard-fought fruits of a costly contest and let the enemy off on easy terms. It was the observation of a French historian of the fifteenth century, Philip de Commines, that, though England beat France in her wars, she has been always beaten by her in her treaties. And this remark has proved true several times since it was made. The treaties of Utrecht, and of Paris of 1763 are the strongest instances of its truth. Chatham was disliked by the new king, who did not find him pliant enough for his ends of personal government. Though he called him again later in order to save himself from ministers whom he disliked more, it was in the decline of his mental powers and health that the great statesman came to the helm. He was not able to direct his own cabinet, which, in the absence of his control, did things opposed to his views and wishes. In the matter of the dispute with the colonies, which proved ultimately so disastrous to the mother-country, his ministry went against his most pronounced opinions and sympathy with the colonists and fomented bitter quarrels which ended in war. His career closed in disease and sorrow, and he had the mortification of seeing his country, whose good he had at heart till the last, committed to a policy which he sagaciously foresaw would result in the loss of the colonies.

As a peace minister Chatham was a failure. He left no memorable legislation behind to mark his office. He had little financial skill and did not care to acquire the knowledge of commerce and other details which is required by a financier. He was also deficient in the knowledge of men and their ways and was poor in party management. In all these respects he contrasts very unfavourably with Walpole and with his great son, both of whom were great financiers and shone as peace ministers. Walpole had not the opportunity of conducting a great war. But Pitt had a great one, and he failed. In this the father compares very favourably with the son. At the beginning of the Seven Years'

War the country was in a very depressed state and the outlook of affairs was very gloomy. The combination against England on the Continent was almost overpowering. The means with which she had to fight seemed small; the services were disorganised, the people were in a state of languor and fright. Within four years Chatham changed the entire state of affairs, and defeated England's enemies on three continents: helped Frederick to put down Austria and France in Europe, conquered the French Empire of Canada in America, and began the series of victories which ended in the British Empire in India. He was enabled to do all this by the force of character as well as of genius. Though deficient in the knowledge and tact of dealing with bodies of men, he knew the capacities of individual men he found, sent each one to the right place and inspired him with his own lofty zeal and patriotism. The people he roused by the force of his character and inspired them with confidence in himself as well as in themselves. The sacrifices which they made at his bidding were large, but they were willingly and cheerfully made. The people knew that they could implicitly trust him who was of themselves and who held aloof from the greedy and interested set of party politicians of the time. In an age of political corruption and jobbery his transparent honesty and integrity, somewhat ostentatiously displayed, was unusual, and increased his popularity immensely. His lofty demeanour, his excessive though noble pride, the almost theatrical airs that he put on on public occasions, when joined to his impassioned and stirring eloquence, his fiery patriotism and his pure and unselfish character, rendered him omnipotent for a time, and influential with the great majority of his countrymen till his death. Even after his death his name acted as a charm with his countrymen. He was one of the very few English statesmen that were really feared on the Continent; and it was said that a hint of Chatham's coming to power again, dropped in the midst of a conversation with boastful Frenchmen and Italians, was enough to render them pale and to put a stop to their bragging talk.

The Expansion of England.

The chief characteristic of English history in the eighteenth century is the great attention which the colonies and other possessions of England in America and Asia were demanding from European politicians. England began to colonise already in the sixteenth century in the reign of Elizabeth, and throughout the seventeenth she steadily sent a stream of her people to America to find new homes and found new states. But, in those early times, these colonies were not much thought of either by England or her enemies. In the eighteenth century, however, matters changed entirely. France had also planted colonies in the neighbourhood of those of England, and she learnt the value of the possession of the New World by a European power. She knew the greatness of Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which was chiefly owing to their colonial empires in the East and the West. She wanted to extend her empire as widely as possible, both in America and in India. In this she found England her most serious rival. Most of the great wars which were waged between England and France in the eighteenth century had a more or less direct reference to the colonies across the ocean. There was rapidly growing beyond the Atlantic a New England and by the side of it a New France, and the rivalry of the nations was extending from the Old World to the New. Both were struggling to get exclusive possession of the New World, and this was the real substantial cause of the incessant conflict between the two countries in the last century.

The late Sir John Seeley has clearly expressed this in his excellent lectures on what he happily calls "the Expansion of England." It has been lightly passed over by historians who lose sight of important factors in the course of the history of nations, merely because they are not on the surface, and magnify those that are. The wars between England and France rose nominally from other causes nearer home. But, as Professor Seeley says, the English exodus to America determines during the eighteenth

century the whole course of affairs. "The main struggle of England from the time of Louis XIV. to the time of Napoleon was for the possession of the New World." Again, "the expansion of England in the New World and in Asia is the formula which sums up for England the history of the eighteenth century. The great triple war of the middle of that century is neither more nor less than the great decisive duel between England and France for the possession of the New World. It was perhaps scarcely perceived at the time, as it has been seldom remarked since; but the explanation of that second Hundred Years' War between England and France, which fills the eighteenth century is this—that they were rival candidates for the possession of the New World." This point then, so much emphasised by the late Cambridge Professor, must be well borne in mind by the student while perusing the history of the last century, with its long wars which recur in bewildering succession and appear to have no definite principle of policy guiding them. "In that century the history of England is not in England, but in America and Asia."

How this great struggle for the New World ended is well known. France lost all her possessions there, which went to swell and expand still more the English colonies. England too lost the direct hold over her colonies which, freed from the terror of French aggression, broke away from the unsympathetic mother-country to pursue their splendid and prosperous career alone and uncontrolled. But though the English crown lost these States, they were not lost to the English language and culture and institutions, which gained vastly by the independence and prosperity of the great American Commonwealth that has grown in this century out of England's rebel colonies. Moreover, at the very time of their separation from England, Cook was beginning the exploration of those strange South Seas, which have opened in the present reign a field for the expansion of Britain just as splendid as America. But a more immediate and brilliant substitute for her lost American colonies was found by England in the East. There too France was her persevering rival and first in the

field. The idea of rearing a European Empire on the ruins of the Mogul States was first conceived and even partially realised by the great French Captain, Dupleix. But there too the English won in the end and completely ousted their enemies. Thus England was expanding itself, and the English nation was spreading itself over the whole world. About the middle of the century she ceased to be a mere European power and became a world-power, with interests and stakes in every continent and every sea. "The Seven Years' War," says Green, "is in fact a turning point in our national history, as it is a turning point in the history of the world. From the close of the Seven Years' War it mattered little whether England counted for less or more with the nations around her. She was no longer a mere European power; she was no longer a mere rival of Germany or France. Her future action lay in a wider sphere than that of Europe. Mistress of Northern America, the future mistress of India, claiming as her own the empire of the seas, Britain suddenly turned high above nations whose position in a single continent doomed them to comparative insignificance in the after-history of the world."

Party.

Party government is an institution in England which has become quite a necessity in the course of her history. It has steadily developed during the last two centuries, till it has now become quite indispensable. Government at the present day in England is government by party. Party is the most potent factor to-day in politics, uniting as well as separating men, utilising one set of politicians at a time in the service of the State and condemning another set equally, if not more, able to obscurity and obstruction. "Party," says the late Sir Erskine May, "has guided and controlled, and often dominated over the more ostensible authorities of the State; it has supported the crown and aristocracy against the people; it has trampled upon public liberty; it has dethroned and coerced kings, overthrown ministers and Parliaments, humbled the nobles and established popular rights. But it has

protected the fabric of the Government from shocks which threatened its very foundations. Parties have risen and fallen; but institutions have remained unshaken. The annals of party embrace a large portion of the history of England." Burke has well defined party as a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. There is obvious advantage in men holding the same political opinions acting together in a body with united strength. There is a much greater chance for these opinions to be carried and rendered effective in the State when supported by the combined strength of a compact party than when merely held by straggling individuals. Nearly all the valuable measures of recent times have been passed by the influence of one or the other of the great parties in the realm. Questions, however important, have little chance of being seriously discussed unless they are taken up by party. Thus the great question of Parliamentary Reform could make no way for nearly fifty years, because it was urged merely by individual members in Parliament. But when it was taken up seriously by the Whig party and made a prominent part of their business, it was soon settled.

Parties appear even in early English history. But they were not then permanent and organised. Men united for achieving a temporary purpose of asserting some right, and then separated. The first trace of party, in the modern sense, appears in the reign of Elizabeth, when the Puritans formed an organized party in the Commons. Parties became more pronounced and sharply defined under the Stuart misrule, which was overthrown by the efforts of the Roundhead or Puritan party. Under Charles II. there were the Court party and the Country party. These two parties got the nicknames of Whig and Tory during their contest on the Exclusion Bill of 1680, and these two names have ever since continued to distinguish the two great parties in the country. Party government developed steadily after the Revolution, and in the eighteenth century, during which the rivalry between Whigs and Tories was very keen and bitter. During

the first half of it the Whigs were almost continuously in power and the Tories could do nothing. Towards its close the tables were turned, the Whigs were completely discredited by the startling events happening France, and the Tories were all-powerful. In our ays the two historic parties got the alternative names Conservative and Liberal, and along with their ange of names there has come over them also a ange of some principles. The Conservatives do not ld all the opinions of their Tory predecessors of the last century, while the Whigs of a former day would stand aghast at the "advanced" views of the Liberals of to-day, who profess to continue their party and tradition. There are no longer two parties in English politics now; in the course of the last few years there have grown up several smaller ones, and this multiplication of parties renders the work of government difficult.

George III.

The English sovereign is practically a mere figure-head in the government with imposing ornamental functions to perform but with no real ruling power. As a foreign observer, M. Thiers, well puts it, the king in England reigns but does not govern. Everything is done in his name, but nothing by him. This present state of the crown is the result of conflicts of several centuries. Theoretically the Crown is as powerful to-day as it ever was under the Tudors or the Stuarts, and it can exercise the most tyrannical power by remaining within the limits of the law. But in practice it is checked in so many ways that this theoretical power is useless. These checks have been imposed by the people at various times against the will and efforts of several sovereigns. And in the present century the sovereigns have acquiesced in this state. But it was otherwise with the king who reigned during the latter half of the last century. George III. refused to follow the example of his grandfather and great-grandfather, and to be a mere nominal sovereign. He wanted to reign in reality. "George, be a king!" was his mother's exhortation to him, and he wanted to be a king indeed. Hence all his

troubles. He tried systematically to impose his personal will and opinion upon the nation and he very nearly succeeded for some time. But he was the last English sovereign to do this. In the end he failed, and what little success he obtained was at the expense of great personal worry and tribulation to which his mind finally succumbed. His example has deterred his successors from repeating his endeavours to be a personal monarch.

His personal character was really exemplary and all the more striking because contrasted with the bad manners and loose morals of his two predecessors. He was deeply religious and devout, simple in his tastes and habits, good-hearted and generous, devoted to his wife and children, and extremely fond of his home. All these virtues were rarely seen on the English throne during two generations and the people heartily welcomed their possessor. He was, moreover, born and bred in England, and a thorough Englishman in tastes and pursuits unlike his German predecessors. All this gained great popularity for him which he retained more or less throughout his long life. In politics, however, these virtues did not keep him from doing great mischief. His early instructors had instilled false notions of royalty into his mind, and he persistently tried to put them into practice with all the inherent stubbornness of his nature. The Tory publicist Bolingbroke was the chief of these and he wrote his "Patriot King" specially for his young royal pupil, in which he held up for his imitation the model of an independent monarch trying to do good to his country according to his own lights without any hindrance from the other parts of the Constitution. However well intentioned he may have been, his conduct was unconstitutional and tending to subvert the Constitution. However bad and immoral his grandfather was, yet of his long reign of thirty-one years, it must be said that during it the rights of the nation were never once invaded, the prerogatives of the Crown never harshly enforced, and that it left the Constitution unimpaired.

But this cannot be said of the long reign of George III. On the contrary, the impartial historian of his reign must

say with Mr. Lecky that "he inflicted more profound and enduring injuries upon his country than any other modern English king. . .. There is scarcely a field of politics in which the hand of the king may not be traced—sometimes in postponing inevitable measures of justice and reform, sometimes in sowing the seed of enduring evil." He spent a long life in resisting obstinately measures which are now almost universally admitted to have been good, and in supporting measures which are as universally admitted to have been bad. He supported all the attacks that were made on the liberty of the subject by some of his ministers. He took the principal part in the Wilkes affair and by his violent and vindictive measures inflamed the country. By patronage and bribery he corrupted the Parliament and the Electorate in order to form and keep up his party. He resisted all attempts at Parliamentary reform so loudly demanded by a section of the country for a long time. He set himself passionately against Catholic Emancipation, and forbade his favourite minister even to broach the subject. He was against any attempt to improve the condition of Ireland, the most impoverished and distracted part of his kingdom. It was he who initiated the policy of coercion against the American Colonies and drove them to resistance and independence. In extenuation it may be said that in most of these he had the body of the people on his side. "The people," says Mr. Montagu Burrows, "were with the king; he thoroughly represented the nation. In all the leading events of his reign the great and generally the overwhelming majority of the people went with their representative man, the king." This may be true to a certain extent, for he was very popular and many circumstances helped to increase his popularity. Towards the close of his reign, the horrors and excesses of the French Revolutionaries created a strong reaction among the English people, and justified some of the views of George. The measures of repression carried by Pitt at the instigation of the king stringent as they were, were thoroughly popular and both of them had the nation behind them.

William Pitt.

William Pitt was George III's Prime Minister for nineteen years, and wielded absolute authority in the Cabinet and Parliament, at the same time enjoying unbounded popularity outside. The period of his ministry fell on some of the most critical and eventful times in English history, and required all his talents and resources to pass the state safely through them. Inheriting a great name, Pitt came to power at the early age of twenty-five after defeating an Opposition directed by some of the most eminent and experienced statesmen of his time. He had a brilliant opportunity and he utilized it fully, remaining in power for a period nearly as long as Walpole and longer than any other Prime Minister after him. The qualities which enabled him to rule so long and well were those of a great Parliamentary statesman. He ruled through Parliament and had a consummate knowledge of its ways. He was a great orator and had the power of pouring forth a stream of well-turned sentences at the shortest notice. His oratory was not fiery, impassioned or imaginative; he excelled in cold sarcasm and cutting invective, and always spoke with great dignity and even majesty of manner. He was a great debater, ready to seize the weak points of an adversary, and prompt in reply. His natural abilities were greatly assisted by his high and pure personal character, which was almost entirely free from the vices of his contemporaries, and which helped him, like his father, to be immensely popular with the nation. His integrity and disinterestedness were unquestionable. To money and gain of any sort he was totally indifferent. His private life was spotless and presented a marked contrast to that of his opponent Fox, who united to brilliant talents laxness of manners and looseness of morals.

Ministers are judged not so much by their abstract qualities and accomplishments as by the practical results of their administration, the good measures they have passed, and the evil they have averted from the state. There have been many statesmen of the best abilities

who, from lack of opportunity or any other cause, have failed to leave any mark on the legislation or policy of the country. Seen from this point of view, Pitt's career may be said to be successful. His financial administration was the best part of his work, and was marked with great foresight, skill, caution and liberality. He mastered the commercial system of the country and tried to develop it. He early adopted the views of Adam Smith, which were then considered novel and dangerous, and advocated free trade. The commercial treaty which he made with France, allowing commercial liberty between the two countries, has been well called by Mr. Lecky the most valuable result of Pitt's legislation. Another important thing he did was to simplify and reform the tariff. The duties levied on articles were extremely numerous and complex, and by their absurd nature defeated the objects of the Government. The cost of collection was heavy, and there was systematic smuggling to defraud the revenue. Pitt saw this and reduced the number of duties to a very small figure, and equalized the burden by lowering excessive duties and raising others. There was much wasteful and corrupt expenditure which was dragging the finances to a very depressed state. He boldly undertook to abolish this and saved a large sum to the country. He also started a sinking fund on a sound basis to pay off the national debt gradually; but much did not come of it, as the country was soon involved in the great struggle with France which multiplied the debt fourfold.

But though in financial matters Pitt achieved brilliant results, he was not equally successful in other directions. Parliamentary reform was coming into prominence in the early years of his rule. He himself had brought forward measures for reform and supported its champions. But when he came into power he did little to carry it. He gave it his sympathy, but did not exert his power to obtain it against the will of the sovereign. The same was the case with his Irish policy and with the question of Catholic relief. He liked to do good to Ireland, but at the sight of the slightest difficulties he abandoned his object lest his power be weakened.

He was convinced that the Catholics were entitled to relief and emancipation, and was willing to give these to them. But he found the king irreconcilably opposed to him in this matter, and he was weak-kneed enough to yield. He had extreme avarice of power and tried to retain it by any means. On account of this avarice he was deterred from making the sacrifices for good causes which he should have made. "The love of power," says Mr. Lecky, "though it never led him to take a course directly injurious to his country, did undoubtedly more than once lead him to cast aside too lightly great causes which might have benefited her. A certain want of heart, a deficiency of earnestness and self-sacrifice is very apparent in his career."

He has been accused of being too subservient to the obstinate and narrow-minded king, who tried to use him as his tool as he had used other but less able ministers, though only more cleverly. The fact is that the disastrous war with the French Revolution entirely dislocated Pitt's career and turned him, in spite of himself, out of his way and former opinions. By nature and inclination a peace minister, he wanted continuous peace to develop his great schemes of reform and benefit the country immensely. But he had to declare war and launch upon a career which entirely frustrated his hopes and engrossed his attention for a decade. This war he managed ill, and as long as he was at its head England presented a feeble and hesitating front to her enemies. The war was forced upon Pitt by the French themselves, and he could not help declaring it, as has been clearly shown from the original records by Mr. Lecky in the sixth volume of his great history. This war ruined Pitt's career. Before it we find, as Mr. Goldwin Smith puts it, "the happier Pitt, him whose monuments remain in free trade, an improved fiscal system, religious toleration, the first step towards colonial emancipation, the abolition of the slave trade, the condemnation of slavery." After it, it is "the Pitt whose monuments remain in six hundred millions of debt and other evils, political and social, of which the bitter inheritance has descended to us and will descend to generations yet to come." The king hated the French and liked the war, and

Pitt was goaded by his party to prolong and continue it. He also allowed himself to play into the hands of the Tories by organizing the terrible reaction against the liberty of the subject which followed in England after the declaration of the war. His own opinions were liberal and in favour of liberty; and the stringent measures which he had to form and execute against a part of his countrymen must have cost him serious anguish of mind. But it is certain that he had the great majority of the nation with him in this course. Burke and others had inflamed the nation to a high pitch and put it into a state of fright. Pitt was not led away by all this, but he had to follow his party. It was the irony of fate that a man of his liberal views should have been the leader of the Tories for so long, and that the latter should have apotheosised a statesman whose chief opinions and works they hate and repudiate. Macaulay has put this in his usual telling antithetic manner in the last paragraph of his excellent biography of the statesman, which is his best and most polished work.

The French Revolution.

Next to the Reformation the French Revolution of the close of the eighteenth century is the most important event in modern history. Originating in France from local causes and changing at first the institutions of that country alone, it soon assumed an aggressive character, overspread the whole of Europe and America, shaking thrones and time-honoured institutions everywhere to their foundations, and profoundly affected the politics of the whole world for an entire generation. The two generations that have succeeded also received their bent from it. The Revolution of 1830, of 1848, of 1870 were but the continuation and repetition of that of 1789, and even to-day the series cannot be said to have ended. The principles brought into vogue by that Revolution are still after a century as potent as ever, and strive more or less successfully to obtain the mastery in practical politics everywhere. They have

directly triumphed only in a few places; even in France they have undergone strange vicissitudes, now trampled under the foot of a tyrant, and again reasserting themselves with a vengeance in popular fury and licence. But indirectly they have been very powerful in modifying the policy of absolute monarchs and ministers who would fain ignore them, but could not. They brought into existence popular and constitutional government of some sort in nearly every country except Russia and Turkey, and even in these there is continual agitation against the absolutism of the rulers. England possessed constitutional government long before the French made their bloody efforts, yet even in England the Revolution affected the course of legislation much and has forced it to move more rapidly than before along the lines of reform and progress. So far as the course of real liberty has been helped—and it has been helped to a considerable extent—by the principles of 1789, they have been productive of great good to the world. It was a great gain to civilization to show conclusively to tyrants that the days of absolute unchecked government are over, and that the people who contribute everything to the revenue and prosperity of the state should have an effective voice in their own legislation and government. It was a great gain to have put down the inordinate pretensions of the aristocracy and other so-called privileged classes, whose existence was a drain on the resources of the state and whose rights and monopolies retarded the progress of the people and impoverished them. It was a great gain to make the voice of the people the most potent factor in government and by raising it on necessary occasions to check the wantonness and selfishness of the rulers.

But all this was done at immense sacrifice, at the cost of unprecedented human misery. The evils which the Revolution brought upon France and the whole of Europe were gigantic, and their effects are still felt. It took from the beginning a violent and sanguinary turn and caused a war of a quarter of a century which took a million and a half of lives and swallowed several hundred millions of money. Caused by the hopeless

oppressed and servile condition of the French people under their Bourbon monarchs, and by the folly and imbecility, alternate strength and weakness of their governments since the death of Louis XIV, the Revolution was at first a protest, strong and determined, of the people against their rulers. There are some who think that the Revolution with all its violence was inevitable, and that things merely took their natural course when the storm of anarchy burst over the country. But we may agree with those who think that, if skilful and sagacious counsels had prevailed, the outbreak might have been checked; if concessions had been made at the right moment and some of the reforms demanded by the popular voice executed in due time, the change need not have been of the desperate and sanguinary character which it soon assumed. After a thorough and impartial study of the previous events, Mr. Lecky comes to the conclusion that "the French Revolution, though undoubtedly prepared by causes which had been in operation for centuries, might, till within a very few years of the catastrophe, have been with no great difficulty averted." A profound change in the character of the government and institutions of France had indeed become inevitable, but such a change, says our author, "need not have been a revolution, and if it had been effected, as very similar changes have been effected in other countries, without the subversion of the monarchy and a total disorganisation of the state, its influence both in French and European history would have been wholly different. In spite of the wars and debts of Louis XIV., in spite of the vices and incapacity of the Regency and of Louis XV., in spite of much class selfishness and a great subversion of ancient opinions, the position of the French monarchy on the accession of Louis XVI. was far from desperate. If a Henry IV. or a Frederick the Great had then mounted the throne, or if Louis XVI. had found for his minister a Richelieu or a Pitt, a Cavour or a Bismarck, France would never have drifted into anarchy." Through want of management and statesmanship on the part of the king and his advisers the popular movement soon passed into the hands of unscrupulous and designing demagogues, who incited the worst passions of the populace, led them on from excess to excess, cut them off from every

chance of compromise and peaceful settlement, till they betrayed the country and its cause into the hands of a despot who trod down liberty and equality under the iron hoof of militarism, involved Europe in the most stubborn and disastrous struggle it had ever known, and put back for a time the progress of civilization, rendering the very names of liberty and popular government odious and of ill omen by the frightful excesses which were committed in their name.

England and the Revolution.

When the Revolution broke out in France, English politicians rejoiced that France, being involved in her domestic troubles, would cease to influence European politics and to thwart English interests. Throughout the eighteenth century French rivalry and jealousy of England was continuous and caused long warfare in Europe, America, and Asia. France had lost her Colonial Empire in the New World in the Seven Years' War. But she took her revenge by aiding the rebellious colonies; and it was when the French actively helped the Americans that the struggle for independence became successful. This French interference was bitterly resented by England. It was, therefore, but natural that England should rejoice in what promised to be her enemy's suicide and extinction. Nothing could have been further from her mind at the beginning of the Revolution than interference in her neighbour's troubles. She would only look on while her rival was hampering herself and crippling her powers by internecine quarrels. But events very soon took a turn which showed that the Revolution would become an international affair and would have serious effects outside the country of its origin. The French were not content to change their own institutions, but soon became aggressive and preached a revolutionary crusade in Europe. They overthrew their own monarchy and invited their neighbours to do the same, offering them their assistance. To England the Revolutionaries looked with special hope. It was the English philosophy of Locke that had inspired many of the French philosophers of the

eighteenth century who were the precursors of the Revolution; it was the English constitution that was the object of their constant panegyric; it was the example of Englishmen that they professed to imitate in reforming and remodelling their government. And a considerable body of Englishmen at first sympathised with the efforts of the French to obtain emancipation from the tyranny of their monarch and nobles. But when it soon appeared that the French were over-leaping all bounds in their headlong career of reform, the feeling in England was speedily turning against them. Burke inflamed the people against the Revolution by his celebrated "Reflexions" which had immense influence on public opinion. He urged interference on the part of England and wanted her to declare war against the Revolution. But Pitt, who was at the head of affairs, was not led away by sentimental reasons. It was only when the French proved very aggressive and committed acts of hostility, as the violation of the treaty relating to the Scheldt, which England had guaranteed, and the invasion of Holland and the Belgic Provinces, that Pitt most unwillingly entered upon a war with the Revolution. That war proved very disastrous to both parties. England wasted her resources and incurred a heavy debt in a struggle which for the first ten years was futile and inglorious. A few naval victories were all that she could boast of. On land her armies were torpid and disorganised, while at home measures were passed most prejudicial to liberty. A small class of wrong-headed zealots still praised the French and their destructive work, but the whole body of the nation kept aloof from them. Still, for checking a few noisy and possibly mischievous men, very stringent laws were made affecting the liberty of the subject, and a reign of terror lasted for several years in England. The excesses of the Revolution were seized as an excuse to put off the most urgent reforms. France fell a prey during the struggle to the ambition of a general who soon engrossed all power and ruled more absolutely than the worst Bourbons had ever done. Liberty, in whose name France had made so many sacrifices and for which she had inflicted so much suffering on herself and others, was banished from the land and an oppressive militarism established. The Empire of Napoleon

rose on the ruins of the Revolution, and, like its symbolic eagle, wanted to devour all the empires around it. England had again to enter upon a long career of war with it, exhausted as she was by her previous struggle. Italy, Germany, Austria, Russia, all had succumbed to the new power. She alone remained unconquered. Vast were the efforts made by Napoleon to conquer and humble her, but she proved more than a match for him. It was England's persistence at immense sacrifice in the war that saved Europe. After nearly a quarter of a century's struggle the ghost of the Revolution was finally laid, so far as England was concerned, on the field of Waterloo. During this struggle all progress was thrown back, the very names of liberty and reform were discredited. It is strange that such should have been the results of a movement whose watch-words at first were "progress and liberty and reform."

Parliamentary Reform.

Parliament, like all other human institutions, became in the course of time liable to abuses and corruption. Times and circumstances had changed enormously since the early days when the constitution of the Parliament had been established. But this constitution was not changed to keep pace with the progress, political and industrial, of the nation. At first Parliament did represent pretty equally and evenly the people. But this equality of representation entirely disappeared in the course of ages. Boroughs which were once populous and flourishing became deserted and decayed. They fell into the hands of a few lords and some rich people. Still their ancient right of sending representatives to Parliament was continued to them. On the other hand, the new industrial class that had arisen in towns had not its qualifications recognised for electoral purposes. Thus populous towns had but few qualified electors who sent representatives that did not really represent the entire population. New cities had sprung up, especially in the north, as the centres of manufacture and trade, which remained without any representation in the Legislature. Thus the great body of the people complained that they were not directly represented in the House of Commons. The House was not popular.

In the eighteenth century most of the seats were trafficked for. Boroughs were openly bought and sold. People invested money in them to get profit by selling votes later on. As members bought their seats by paying a heavy price for the boroughs, so they in their turn sold their votes in the House to recoup and enrich themselves. Most of the boroughs were the property of the great noble families who thereby became powerful in the state. The heads of these families nominated members for their boroughs, and these voted according to their order. The House of Commons thus became, to a great extent, subservient to the House of Lords, whose nominees formed a majority of its members. This is one of the chief reasons why the great Whig families so long ruled England in the eighteenth century. The House of Commons had become supreme in the Constitution after the Revolution of 1688, and the party that wanted to govern must predominate there. So recourse was had to corrupting that House. When George III resolved upon breaking the power of the Whigs, he resorted to the same means of corruption. Through his agents and friends he bought or otherwise secured as many seats as he could to oust the Whigs.

The people were alive to this corruption and abuse of the part of the constitution which pretended to be their representative and champion. Its glaring faults and defects were exposed among them, and its reform was agitated. Many eminent statesmen of the time of George III were in favour of reform, notably Chatham, who plainly said that the borough representation was the "rotten part of our constitution" which ought to be cut off. Burke too was in its favour. William Pitt in the early part of his career brought in measures of Parliamentary Reform without success because he had not then supreme power. The cause of reform was gaining strength for some time when the reaction caused in England by the follies and crimes of the French Revolution retarded its progress along with that of other good causes. The Reformers, whenever they stirred, were sternly put down. They were confounded with rebels and revolutionaries, and their cause was discredited. But when England slowly recovered from the unseemly fright into which it was thrown by France,

Parliamentary Reform was at once agitated by Whig statesmen like Lord John Russell and others. The King and the Lords still opposed it vehemently. But the country was now thoroughly roused against them almost to the pitch of civil warfare. They had to yield, and the House of Commons was reformed to suit the changed times in 1832. The door was then opened, and in the next generation agitation was made for further reform, which was obtained in 1867. In our own times Parliament has been reformed for the third time in 1884, and, according to the tendencies of the times, it seems that it will be reformed again after much shorter intervals than before.

The Great Peace.

The war with the Revolution and with Napoleon had exhausted England by its length and costliness. The nation had been roused to a high pitch of activity and readily made great sacrifices. But when the war was over and the great European menace removed, a period of prostration naturally followed. The reaction was as violent and severe as the previous action had been. People had got tired of war with its burden of taxation and debt and longed for peace. Peace had at length come after more than twenty years, during which questions of the most vital importance in politics and society were set aside. And peace the people were determined to have for a long while in which to work out their domestic reforms. In spite of recurring revolutions in France and elsewhere, England continued to stand aloof and merely to watch her own interests. France had learnt at terrible cost not to embroil her neighbour, and to work out its own destiny without menacing that of any other country. Hence the political changes of 1830, 1848, and 1851, profoundly as they affected France directly and all Europe indirectly, did not occasion any interference on the part of England, who pursued the wise policy of recognising whatever government the French chose to impose upon themselves. This peace lasted for nearly forty years, till it was broken by the Crimean War, in which England and France fought together for a common purpose with Russia.

This period of peace is noted for very important reforms in political and social matters. The war, as we have said, postponed the consideration of all of them, and people acquisced in the wisdom of this postponement. But when the struggle was over the question began to be agitated again. The Revolution had frightened many politicians even of liberal views into a state of intense caution and suspicion. The Tories became quite reactionary and for a few years after 1815 pursued a policy of repression and coercion which merely goaded the people to demand the reforms more clamourously and made them in the end inevitable. "During the first few years which succeeded Waterloo," says the latest historian of the period, Mr. Spencer Walpole, "Englishmen enjoyed less real liberty than at any time since the Revolution of 1688. The great majority of the people had no voice in the Legislature. Political power was in the hands of a few fortunate individuals, who were bent on retaining the monopoly which they had secured. The tax-payers were laden with fiscal burdens which were both unequal and ill-devised. Death was the punishment which the law awarded to the gravest and most trivial crimes. The pauper was treated as a criminal, and the administration of the Poor Laws made almost every labourer a pauper. Harsh and oppressive as the laws already were, the oligarchy by which England was governed was continually demanding harsher and more oppressive legislation. During the five years which succeeded Waterloo the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended; the liberty of the press was restricted; the right of public meeting was denied; domiciliary visits in search of arms were allowed." But all this was soon changed. The people were earnest in their demands, and were in no mood to brook the coercion of narrow-minded oligarchs. They wanted reform, and if they could not get that peacefully, they were prepared to make a revolution. Fortunately wise counsels prevailed with the rulers. The King and the Tories yielded, and allowed the Whigs the chosen champions of the people's demands, to carry out the wishes of the nation. The constitution of Parliament, which had become the predominant ruling part in the state, was revised and the great middle class was represented in it. The disabilities of the Dissenters

Edited by MR. R. P. KARKARIA.

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PROFESSOR JOHN NICHOL, IN JOHN MORLEY'S "ENGLISH OF LETTERS: *Carlyle.*"

The scope and sense of the limitations of Carlyle's critical power are exhibited in his second series of Lectures delivered in 1838, when he had reached the maturity of his powers . . . This posthumous publication (edited by Mr. Karkaria) is justified by its interest and obvious authenticity . . . . The whole volume is a testimony to the speaker's power of speech, to his often unsurpassed penetration, and to the hopeless variance of the often rapidly shifting streams of his thought.

[SIR RAYMOND WEST, K.C.I.E., BEFORE THE B. B. R. A. SOCIETY.]

I thank also the kindly supporter of the motion, Mr. Karkaria, and I trust that the younger members of the Society whom he so worthily represents will maintain the traditions of this Society and be working members of it and consider it their duty to contribute, so far as their vocations will allow, to the proceedings of the Society something which will make it live in history as a source of those materials on which historians build . . . . To go into another field outside India itself, Mr. Karkaria has given us some valuable papers on the Assyrian relics of this Society and showed his remarkable versatility by reading a paper on Carlyle before he committed those documents to book-form.—*Journal of the Society, Vol. XVIII.*

[*From the* WESTMINSTER REVIEW.]

Carlyle's lectures on the History of Literature are excellent reading; they were delivered by him in 1838 and are now published for the first time. We have often said that, if you desire to cherish anything like hero-worship for an author, you ought to know nothing of him but his works. The remark does not hold good in all cases. But it is peculiarly applicable to Carlyle. Every fragment of his writing that is from time to time unearthed does him honour and is worthy of his great reputation, but the anecdotes of his private life and unhappily they abound—do but lower and belittle him. Even the rambling reminiscences which Sir Gavan Duffy has been contributing . . . . do but strengthen the unfavourable impression . . . . From that

damaging attempt at rehabilitation, such contributions to the sum of the published works of Carlyle as the Lectures now before us edited by Mr. Karkaria are a welcome relief. With most of the opinions they advance we are already familiar from the author's previously published works; but it is pleasant as well as instructive to find them arranged and marshalled in the form of a cursory history of European literature. Mr. Karkaria's notes and introduction seem to us very much to the purpose, and the volume is a welcome step towards a complete edition of the works of Thomas Carlyle.

[*From the* TIMES.]

When Carlyle gets upon ground with which he is more familiar—that of the literary history of the modern world—his native genius re-appears here and there. In what he says about Dante and his age, about Luther and the Reformation, about Cervantes and chivalry, about the literature of the *Aufklarung*, about Swift, Johnson, Hume, and Gibbon, and finally about Goethe and his influence, we seem once more to catch vivid glimpses of Carlyle, whom we know and admire . . . . The notes of Mr. Karkaria are less pretentious and often more to the point.

[*From the* LONDON GUARDIAN.]

Even if these pages had no other value, they would be useful as making it clear to us that Carlyle's ultimate style was genuinely developed out of his more conversational utterances, and that the earliest form of his more studied writings was for him the most artificial . . . . Mr. Karkaria has generally done this part of the work well. For Mr. Karkaria's edition we have little but praise; the notes are generally useful as well as unpretending . . . . Mr. Karkaria's extremely able introduction brings before us with admirable lucidity the two opinions which are the guiding lines of these lectures—the necessity of belief for true progress and culture, and the "well-known view that all great things are unconscious." On the latter point Mr. Karkaria's summary is so excellent that we may well, in taking leave of him, let him speak for himself.

[*From the* CATHOLIC EXAMINER.]

But for Mr. Karkaria's industry, these Lectures would still be lying submerged among the dingy records of the Bombay Asiatic Society. This fortunate circumstance and the equipment of collateral knowledge as well as literary taste which this youthful editor bestows upon his task suggest some pertinent reflections. It is commonly said—nay, it is commonly seen—that no matter how fluently a native of India may write our mother-tongue, his grammar may be faultless, his phrases may challenge analysis, he may be educated to his finger-tips, yet he is none the less sure to expose himself by the very complexion and turn of his thought . . . It is therefore a notable mark of Mr. Karkaria's triumph over the characteristic touches, not of mere idiom, but of literary instinct which they reveal, and of the intrinsic soul of sympathy with which he edits his work, that it would puzzle the wariest critic to discern wherein his style and the direction of his thought are distinguishable from British standards. His introduction is an easy-flowing narrative illustrated by *a propos* references from the stores of a copious and well-digested reading diversified, but nowhere burdened, with pleasant side-lights of criticism in which there does not appear a single solecism of expression or thought or feeling.

[*From the* LITERARY WORLD.]

The Bombay book has the advantage of much more elaborate editing than has been vouchsafed to the London one. Mr Karkaria

has taken the trouble to add a number of notes interesting in themselves and calculated to elucidate the text. Our remark is that so much is there of racy insight and imaginative language in these lectures, and so magical is the general charm of Carlyle's genius, that we read them to the last word, and then regretted that they were at an end.

[*From the* ATHENÆUM.]

Students will be glad to have brought within their reach notes of lectures hitherto only known from Professor Dowden's Extracts. Mr. Anstey's notes are so interesting that we must be sorry he or some other reporter was not also present at the first and third series—of which nearly all trace is lost. They serve to give us as much insight into Carlyle's own culture and his wide aquaintance with literature at the middle period of his life. His observations are fresher, and these are particularly interesting. Mr. Karkaria's text is taken from Anstey's original MS. The editor has been so painstaking in identifying Carlyle's references and in quoting parallel or similar passages from his own or others' writings that it would be ungracious to find fault with the naïve criticisms on which he occasionally ventures.

[*From the* ANNUAL REGISTER, 1891.]

In the field of literature there are several books of interest and importance. First of all there is a volume of Lectures by Carlyle. The history of these last lectures is very curicus . . . . They are interesting enough. Mr. Karkaria's notes are generally careful and of use.

[*From* PUBLIC OPINION.]

Admirers of Carlyle have now the opportunity of reading one of his earliest works which bears the stamp of his idiosyncrasies that marked the later volumes from his pen . . . Great care has been exercised by Mr. Karkaria, and the references are copious. As a short and concise account of the history of European literature the volume is of no small value and of singular interest.

[*From the* BOOKSELLER.]

The most important point is that Mr. Karkaria has verified the countless references made by Carlyle, and gives in foot-notes valuable parallel passages and quotations, sometimes cited by Carlyle and sometimes supplied by himself. The introduction is careful and scholarly.

[*From the* GLASGOW HERALD.]

The Indian edition, which has been printed direct from the notes of Mr. T. C. Anstey, now in the possession of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, has been edited by Mr. R. P. Karkaria, who has been at considerable pains in verifying Carlyle's literary references in copious footnotes. Mr. Karkaria has also written an introduction to the work, in which he mainly deals with contemporaneous accounts of Carlyle's appearance on the lecture platform.

[*From the* NORTHERN WHIG.]

Mr. Karkaria now presents its contents to the world admirably edited and annotated. These lectures on European culture possess a great value and interest for all admirers of Carlyle.

[*From the* LIVERPOOL MERCURY.]

The editorial sketch of Mr. Karkaria is very interesting, and enables us to realise the circumstances under which the lectures were produced.

BY MR. R. P. KARKARIA.

Pratapgad Fort and the Episode of Shivaji and Afzulkhan,

TOLD FROM THE

Original Mahratta Chronicles.

8vo. Second Edition.

POONA:

LONDON: *T. G. Johnson.*

[*From the* TIMES OF INDIA.]

Mr. R. P. Karkaria's paper was not only exceedingly interesting, but would be attractive to those readers who would not care to follow him in his somewhat minute historical inquiry . . . By the side of this Mahomedan version Mr. Karkaria put for the first time in English in its entirety the account which the Mahrattas themselves give of it, and which is to be found in their *bakhars* . . . Mr. Karkaria forcibly points out the improbability of the Mahomedan account, and the greater probability and credibility of the Mahratta view, and every historian of Shivaji must fairly weigh both sides, which seems not to have hitherto been done.

[*From the* BOMBAY GAZETTE.]

This brochure of Mr. Karkaria has caused a good deal of attention to be paid to his subject, and a critic in England lately called it "the most notable recent contribution to Indian history."

[*From* NATIVE OPINION.]

When Mr. R. P. Karkaria gave to the literary world his edition of some unpublished lectures of Carlyle, it was at once seen that there was in him real capacity for historical research. The foot-notes attached thereto showed that he was a man of wide reading and perseverance. It was thought by many that it would be a distinct advantage if the young Parsee graduate turned his attention to Indian history, many important points of which require further light. It is a satisfaction to see that that wish stands a good chance of being realised. It is a matter of sincere congratulation that he has undertaken to write a biography of Shivaji, the founder of the Mahratta Empire. Mr. Karkaria's paper is a sufficiently re-assuring indication of an unbiassed and judicious mind . . He seems to have commenced his work in the proper manner. He is sifting his materials for himself. He is studying the available Mahratta *bakhars*. He is visiting the principal hill forts of the Mahrattas. We may therefore look forward to a reliable biography of Shivaji . . . European writers ought in fairness to have taken the right view of the situation. Mr. Karkaria has now done what they failed to do and has done a real service to Indian history by putting matters in their proper light, and the whole of Mahrasthra feels grateful to him for thus rescuing the founder of the bygone Empire from unmerited obloquy. We now anxiously await Mr. Karkaria's promised biography of Shivaji.

[*From the* DNYAN PRAKASH.]

It is most gratifying to see that scholars and students of history like Mr. Karkaria have begun to feel the great importance of studying the history of India from the original chronicles and *bakhars*. We are especially glad to see that the attention of our learned men is attracted towards the history of Mahrasthra and the founder of the Mahratha Raj. It evidently seems from Mr. Karkaria's address that he is engaged in writing a biography of Shivaji.

In his address Mr. Karkaria has quite vividly shown how the general character of Shivaji and especially his conduct on the occasion of meeting Afzulkhan have been maligned by the Mahomedan historians.

[*From the* SUDHARAK.]

One of the faults with which the educated Indians are charged is the lack in them of any critical faculty. This blame is not quite unjustified. There are, however, a few educated Indians who have made a name and fame in the archæological branch. Signs are now visible that the same spirit of critical research will begin to be brought to the writing of epochs in Indian history dealing with recent periods. The history of the Mahrattas is a field all dear to our people, and it is expected that in the near future a mass of material hitherto used and unused will be utilized by some of our scholars who will then give us a true and correct account of the Mahratta power. And with this expectation Mr. R. P. Karkaria deserves the thanks of all lovers of history for his very valuable contribution. Mr. Karkaria, besides going through the volumes of English writers dealing with the period, has digested the accounts of the Mahomedan writers as well as what materials could be gathered from the countrymen of Shivaji. The results of his study are noted in a very beautiful style and show what labour he must have undergone to produce it. It is to be hoped that Mr. Karkaria will supplement his production by similar feats and that his example will be followed by a few learned people of Mahrasthra.

[*From the* INDU PRAKASH.]

The paper of Mr. Karkaria is likely to awaken an interest in the learned public in a historical subject which is as interesting and important as it is shrouded in obscurity and prejudice. The subject is very badly handled by English historians. Mr. Karkaria deserves to be thanked for bringing the subject before a learned body like the Asiatic Society.

[*From the* KESARI.]

We must thank heartily the Parsee gentleman for his learned contribution.

[*From the* MAHRATTA.]

Mr. Karkaria's paper is useful to remove the wrong impressions which the one-sided report of the Mahomedan chroniclers have created In giving the true and the authentic account from the Mahratta *bakhars* Mr. Karkaria has laid the public, and especially the English writers under great obligation, and we hope that his paper will create amongst the English writers a desire to study the original manuscript accounts in Mahrati recorded by contemporary witnesses . . . . . We hope Mr. Karkaria's example will be followed by our Mahratta graduates who cannot do better service to their country than writing a history of the Mahrattas from the Mahratta point of view.

Mahmud of Ghazni and the Legend of Somnath.

By R. P. Karkaria.

8vo.

[*From the* Times of India.]

Mr. Karkaria treated critically an important episode in the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni . . . Mr. Karkaria contends that those English writers were misled by the popular Persian historian Ferishta whose work has been their chief source of information . . . . Mr. Karkaria has done well in examining it again, but old legends die hard.

[*From the* Bombay Gazette.]

In the spirit of critical inquiry Mr. R. P. Karkaria has pursued the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni, of which he is engaged in writing an historical monograph, and tackled the famous legend of Somnath . . . The treatment of his subject, in the course of which he traced the legend through successive Persian historians during six centuries, shows great mastery over his subject and leads us to expect much from his forthcoming history of Mahmud of Ghazni, a hero concerning whom no adequate account exists in the English language.

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